

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

ON THE ROAD

Watch out for Distracted Drivers and Pedestrians

- Shopping center parking lots are busier during the holidays. Keep an eye out for distracted pedestrians and drivers who may not be paying attention to you, especially when backing out of parking spaces.
- For parents of teens, remind them to be extra alert during this holiday season, when conditions are more challenging even for experienced drivers.
- Make sure you are not distracted while driving. Commit to keeping your phone down. No text message or playlist is worth the risk.
- Use a designated driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol and over-the-counter or illegal drugs all cause impairment.

Make Sure Every Passenger has a Seat Belt, Car Seat, or Booster Seat

- Remember to buckle up every ride, every time, whether it's the long trip to visit family or around the block to the mall.
- When traveling in large groups, all riders in a vehicle need their own seat belt or car seat, even for short rides.
- Check your car seat before holiday travel. Seventy-three percent of car seats are not used or installed correctly, so check it before you hit the road. It takes only 15 minutes. If you are having even the slightest trouble, questions or concerns, certified child passenger safety technicians are able to help or even double check your work. Find a Safe Kids car seat checkup event near you.
- Safety in the car goes beyond your little ones. Kids who have outgrown a forward-facing harness seat are not ready for a seat belt or front seat yet. They are safest in a booster seat that enables the adult seat belt to fit properly. Even when children have graduated from booster seats, they should remain in the back seat until they reach the age of 13.

Expect the Unexpected on the Road

- Have an exit strategy on the road. So, now the car is packed, the kids are in the right seat, the seats are installed properly, and you're on the open road. Nothing can stop you now, right? Wrong. That's when you hear that all too familiar howl that means "I want food" or "Change my diaper." When it happens, please don't worry about making good time. Instead, get off at the next exit and find a safe area to feed or change your child.
- You never know when you have to stop abruptly, so keep hot foods, large gifts, and anything that can become a projectile in the trunk.
- If you are headed to a party and plan to drink alcohol, designate a driver or use a car service to make sure you get home safely.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

IN THE HOME

Decorate Your Tree with Your Kids in Mind

- Kids are curious and will want to play with the ornaments on the tree, so you might as well prepare. Move the ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks towards the top of the tree. That makes room at the bottom for the ones that are safer for young kids.
- Always use the proper step ladder; don't stand on chairs or other furniture.
- Consider an artificial tree as they are much safer and cleaner.
- A real tree should not lose green needles when you tap it on the ground.
- Cut one inch off the trunk to help absorb water.
- Leave the tree outside until ready to decorate.
- The tree stand should hold a minimum of one gallon of water.
- Check the water level daily.
- Make sure the tree is secured and cannot be knocked over.
- Keep the tree away from all heat sources.
- Use miniature lights that have cool-burning bulbs.
- Always turn off the tree lights when going to bed or leaving the house.
- Never use candles, even on artificial trees.
- Dispose of the tree properly after the holidays.

Check the Lights

- Lights are one of the best parts of holiday decorating. Take a look at the ones on your tree and in and around your home for exposed or frayed wires, loose connections, or broken sockets.
- Make sure you have a properly working fire alarm.
- Use only outdoor lights on the exterior of the home.
- Never use worn light strings.
- Connect no more than three strands of lights together.
- Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords.
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above ground and out of the snow.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.

Candles

- Never leave burning candles unattended or sleep in a room with a lit candle.
- Keep candles out of reach of children.
- Make sure candles are on stable surfaces.
- Keep holiday candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn and don't forget to blow them out when you leave the room or before you go to sleep.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

OUTSIDE THE HOME

Outdoor Decorations

- Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations used for outdoor decorating are marked for outdoor use.
- Match power needs (amperage) of electrical products with amperage rating of extension cords.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If circuits are not GFCI-protected, portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold and require no special knowledge or equipment to install.
- Inspect all lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage before using.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, the house, or other firm supports to protect them from wind damage, but take care not to attach the lights in a way that could damage the cord's insulation.
- Keep all extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water.
- Make sure spotlights used to illuminate decorations are well-ventilated, protected from weather, and a safe distance from flammable items.
- Inspect ladders for loose or missing screws, hinges, bolts, and nuts before using.
- Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when decorating outdoors. Metal ladders conduct electricity.
- Use the right ladder height, ensuring ladders extend at least three feet past the edge of the roof.
- Exercise caution when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet from power lines.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.
- Make sure that cords are not pinched in doors, windows, or under heavy furniture, which could damage the cord's insulation.
- Do not mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.
- Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing bulbs or fuses.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.

Turkey Fryer

- Set up the fryer more than 10 feet from the house and keep children away.
- Find flat ground; the oil must be even and steady to ensure safety.
- Use a thawed and dry turkey; any water will cause the oil to bubble furiously and spill over.
- The fryer lid and handle can become very hot and cause burns.
- Have a fire extinguisher ready at all times.