

Holiday Safety

The holiday season brings days filled with family and friends, children running around, pets underfoot, food cooking in the kitchen, and a game on television. It also comes with hazards that can keep us from enjoying the fun—and from getting back to work when the holiday is over. At work or at home, holiday safety begins with a safety mindset. Know what hazards are present and make it a point to minimize and control those hazards.

Take care of yourself.

Holidays can get filled up with obligations—to decorate, shop, cook, travel, and host. Make time to get plenty of sleep. Don't overdo-it. Keep up with your exercise routine. Eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Don't overindulge in sweets or alcohol.

Keep your spending in check.

Spending may not sound like a safety issue, but the stress that financial problems create is a safety issue. It takes only a moment to hand over your credit card, but the stress caused by overspending can last well beyond the holidays. Save cash by reducing the amount you travel. Talk to family members about scaling back on gifts or putting a cap on the amount of money everyone spends.

Stay safe in the kitchen.

Keep young children away from the stove. Turn pot handles inward to prevent hot foods from being knocked off the stove. Make certain food is thoroughly cooked. Keep cutting boards and counters clean to avoid getting sick. Clean up spills right away to avoid slips. Handle knives carefully, just like you do at work. Always cut away from yourself.

Avoid fire hazards.

Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Don't leave candles, open flames, or a fireplace unattended. Don't overload electrical circuits. Limit the use of extension cords. Keep space heaters away from flammables and combustibles. Always keep lighters and matches out of the reach of children.

Be aware of your personal safety.

When you are out shopping, keep gifts and packages locked in the trunk and out of sight from thieves. Avoid carrying large sums of money.

Travel safely.

Never drink and drive and never let others drink and drive. Have a designated driver to get you home safely. Every person in the vehicle should wear a seat belt. Dress for the weather--if you have car trouble, you'll stay warm and dry longer if you're dressed appropriately.

