

Happy Thanksgiving!



Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to gather with friends and family, eat delicious food, watch football (or the parade!), and travel to visit loved ones. While enjoying the holiday, and as things might get hectic, it is important to always keep safety in mind.

Top safety hazards during the Thanksgiving holiday include:

- **FIRE.** kitchen fires, candles and outdoor deep fryers
- **FOOD.** choking and poisoning, cuts and burns during food preparation
- **TRAVEL.** car accidents, driving while intoxicated or distracted

KITCHEN SAFETY

- Keep children away from the stove.
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FIREPLACE SAFETY



Winter is just around the corner, and when the weather outside turns frightful, there's nothing so delightful as a warming fireplace. However, before you fire up the household hearth, let us remind you of a few simple safety rules that can help make your fireplace warm and cozy instead of a potential health and safety hazard.

- Have your chimney checked annually. Creosote builds up in chimneys and provides fuel for chimney fires. An inspection will reveal the extent of build-up and whether a cleaning is needed. An inspection may also show that small animals have put their summer to good use building a nest in your chimney, another great source of chimney fire fuel. Most importantly, an inspection can reveal whether cracks have developed in the chimney walls, cracks that can allow deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into your home.
- Sparks can fly, so use a fireplace screen to keep sparks in the fireplace and away from carpeting and other combustible surfaces.
- Never leave a fire unattended. Make sure the fire has been completely extinguished before you leave the house or go to bed.
- Gas fireplaces need to have jets cleaned and all lines and connections checked to make sure everything is leak-free and in good working order. Dirty jets can cause gas to burn incompletely, resulting in a build-up of deadly carbon monoxide.
- All woods are not created equal. Dry, seasoned hardwoods burn hotter and cleaner. Never burn old lumber; it may be treated and burning treated lumber can release harmful chemicals.

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- Do not leave the house while the turkey is cooking.
- Ensure the kitchen floor is kept clear and doesn't have any trip hazards.
- Keep matches, lighters, candles and knives out of the reach of children.

HOLIDAY FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

- Keep baking soda on hand to put out kitchen fires.
- Do not leave food cooking or the stove unsupervised.
- Make sure smoke alarms are working.
- A household fire extinguisher should always be nearby.
- Do not leave candles burning unattended and do not burn candles near flammable items like curtains or potpourri.
- Follow all instructions carefully when using a deep fryer and monitor closely!

FOOD SAFETY

- Always wash your hands after handling raw or under-cooked poultry.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and produce to prevent cross-contamination.
- The USDA recommends cooking the turkey at a minimum of 325 degrees. Use a food thermometer and cook the turkey to an internal temperature of 165 to 180 degrees to ensure the turkey is cooked thoroughly and to avoid illness caused by consuming under-cooked poultry.
- Store leftovers within 2 hours or toss them.

HOLIDAY TRAVEL SAFETY

With Thanksgiving being one of the most travel-heavy times of the year, it is important to be prepared before hitting the road and to drive defensively, especially during bad weather.

Drivers who are texting take their eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds. Driving at 55 mph, that is about the length of a football field.

- Buckle up, every trip.
- Make sure your vehicle is well maintained.

- Plan your route ahead of time.
- Carry an emergency kit in the car.
- Be aware of weather conditions.
- Take caution in parking lots while out shopping.
- No texting while driving.

According to the National Highway Safety Association, more than 40% of holiday car accidents involve alcohol. **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE.**

Keep Your Ears on the Job

With all the emphasis on safety in the workplace, hearing conservation is still not always taken seriously enough. Maybe that's because hearing loss is less obvious than other injuries, as it occurs gradually over time. But that does not make it any less serious. Even companies with excellent safety programs sometimes have a hard time getting workers to wear hearing protection.

Noise is present everywhere in American industry. What determines the likelihood of hearing loss is not so much the type of noise, but its excessive level and duration. OSHA mandates hearing conservation programs at certain levels of noise exposure. But those are minimum standards, and many companies actually exceed them.

Hearing protection can only do so much. The best approach to hearing conservation is to "engineer out" the noise. If you can't engineer out the noise then ensure the right protection is used and used properly.

People who lose their hearing often become socially isolated. It destroys their quality of life. It's so much easier to prevent hearing loss than to fix it. Your ears are always on the job. Protect them well.

Safety Tip of the Month

Fall is here and with it comes cold mornings and warm afternoons. Avoid hypothermia and heat stress by dressing in layers.

Notes From the Editor

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