

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. (continued on page 2)

Don't Drink and Drive!



Remember as the holiday season approaches, we face our biggest safety challenge of the year. From Thanksgiving through New Year, our attention turns from work to celebrating the holidays. From gathering around the table for Thanksgiving dinner to the Christmas parties that spring up everywhere and finally finishing it off with the big New Year's Eve celebration. All too often, safety is forgotten.

The biggest safety problem is drinking and driving, especially here in New Mexico. The State Police estimate that after 10 o'clock in the evening, one of every two drivers on the road have been drinking.

Now we're not saying don't celebrate. All we're saying is if you are going to celebrate use one of the following alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Use a designated driver.
- If you don't have a designated driver, call a taxi
- Call a friend
- Call an UBER or Lift
- Call tipsy tow

If you're hosting a party, be a good host. Take your guest's car keys as they arrive and if you feel they've had too much to drink, find them another way home or let them spend the night.

Anything is better than drinking and driving. Remember, only the passage of time can dissipate the alcohol and its effects. The rule of thumb is 1 hour for every ounce of alcohol consumed within an hour. Have a safe and happy holiday season. Keep Safety First!

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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.

DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE.

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.
- 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.
- 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.

Safety Tip of the Month

Fall is here and with it comes cold mornings and warm afternoons. Dress in layers.

Notes From the Editor

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