

Holiday SAFETY TIPS

- **When the weather outside is frightful, heat your home safely.** Never use your stove or oven to heat your home, and never leave portable heaters unattended. Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas. Test them monthly. Be sure to have your chimney cleaned as well.
- **Drive your sleigh and reindeer safely.** Avoid driving in a storm, but if you must, keep your gas tank full, and be sure to let someone know your destination, route, and when you expect to arrive.
- **Prepare your vehicle for traveling to grandmother's house.** Make an emergency kit and include items such as blankets, sleeping bags, jumper cables, fire extinguisher, compass, road maps, shovel, tire repair kit, extra clothing, flares, and a tow rope. Make sure everyone has their seat belts securely fastened.
- **Help prevent the spread of Covid and flu.** Wash your hands with soap and water as often as possible, or use hand sanitizer. Cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough.
- **Prevent hypothermia by following Santa's lead.** Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing, which keeps you warmer than a single heavy coat. Wear a hat, preferably one that covers your ears. Seek medical attention immediately if you have symptoms of hypothermia, including confusion, dizziness, exhaustion, and severe shivering.
- **Roasting chestnuts on an open fire?** Avoid many fire dangers that are common this time of year. Stay in the kitchen while you are cooking, and be alert. Keep anything flammable such as potholders, towels, or curtains, away from your stove top. Have a "kids-free zone" of at least three feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drinks are prepared or carried.
- **Cut down on your heating bills without being a Grinch.** Get your furnace cleaned by a professional. Change the filters regularly. Make sure heat vents aren't blocked by furniture. Close off any rooms not being used, and close heat vents or turn off radiators in those rooms.
- **Designate a driver or skip the holiday cheer.** When you designate a driver who won't be drinking, you help make sure a good party doesn't turn into a tragedy. And a good host ensures there are non-alcoholic beverages available.
- **Keep your distance.** Place trees, wreaths, and other holiday decorations at least three feet away from heat sources, such as fireplaces, portable heaters, radiators, heat vents, and candles.
- **Before you settle in for your long winter's nap.** Always unplug holiday lights before leaving home or going to bed, and always extinguish candles before leaving the room or going to bed.
- **Including reindeer.** Keep curious pets and children away from trees, and Kwanzaa or menorah candle stands.

