

S.A.F.E. Newsletter

Tis the Season

Festive celebrations, flickering lights, and winter greens are hallmarks of the holiday season, but they also present fire risks that can quickly turn this festive time of year into a devastating one. This year make fire safety a holiday tradition.



No holiday celebration would be complete without a feast, but be sure to take precautions against kitchen fires when you're cooking and baking. That includes keeping children and flammable items such as grocery bags and kitchen towels away from the stove and oven and clean up greasy spills as you go to remove another fire hazard.

In the past, Christmas celebrations featured wax candles on live tree branches – inside homes! Today we know better, but risks still remain. If your family prefers real trees, be sure to water yours every day because dry needles and wood catch fire more easily. Go ahead and use many strings of light, but don't plug in more than the max allowable number of strings (usually 3 - 5), opt for a power strip instead. Discard light strings that are worn or broken and be sure to always unplug the lights before leaving the house or going to sleep.



Celebrating Hanukkah or Kwanzaa? It's possible to buy electric menorahs and kinaras, but if you prefer traditional candles you can still celebrate in a fire smart way. Keep flammable items, including curtains and holiday decorations, at least 3 feet away from your candles. Place your menorah or kinara on a non-flammable surface to catch the melting candle wax, such as a tray lined with aluminum foil. Never leave lit candles unattended.

Nothing takes the chill off winter holidays like the light curling up in front of the fireplace. Just be sure to keep “fuel” – from wrapping paper to rugs to clothing – at least three feet away from the flames. Use a fire screen to keep embers and logs from escaping. Lastly, make sure all embers are fully extinguished before you turn in for the night.



Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following these simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season. For more seasonal fire safety information visit the National Fire Protection Association holiday tips page, [here](#).



Policy Pop Quiz



As the weather turns colder, employees may want to bring a space heater to work. Others may want to spread a little cheer by decorating their space for the holidays. Please take a moment to review the following policies before plugging in that space heater or hanging those stringing those lights.

[Administrative Guide 11.4.21 Use of Space Heaters on Campus](#)

[Administrative Guide 11.4.03 Holiday Decorations](#)

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Occupational Health and Safety at 501-686-5536 or submit a consultation request via the UAMS Call Center.

Safe Shopping

The holiday season is here — a time filled with festive celebrations, cherished traditions, and plenty of shopping. From Black Friday through the New Year, stores are bustling with customers looking for deals, gifts, and holiday cheer. However, with the increased crowds and heightened activity, the importance of staying safe cannot be overstated.

According to experts, scammers and thieves typically become bolder during the holidays, and their actions can quickly spoil anyone's holiday cheer. With the shopping season in full swing it's important to remain aware of your surroundings while on your shopping trips. Follow the safety tips below to keep you and your loved ones safe in stores, parking lots, and online:



- Shop with friends or relatives when taking a trip to the store. You may find safety in numbers.
- Park in well-lit areas to make your vehicle less likely to be targeted for theft or vandalism.
- Stay attentive in crowds. Avoid texting while walking or wearing headphones/ear buds.
- Keep your purse close to your body and your wallet in an inside coat pocket or front pants pocket.
- When you enter a store, make note of exit locations in case an emergency occurs.
- Never count your cash in plain view of strangers.
- Refrain from taking money out until asked and avoid large amounts of cash. If possible, opt for credit/debit card purchases.
- Slip your more expensive purchases into less noticeable bags.
- Do not leave packages in plain view in your vehicle. Lock your vehicle and place all your merchandise in the trunk.
- Try to make purchases on just one credit card to reduce the risk of having multiple cards compromised.
- Avoid public wi-fi when shopping online and reputable, secure websites.

Driving with Confidence



The holiday season is a time of joy, celebration, and, for many, travel. Whether you're heading to family gatherings, festive events, or holiday getaways, safe driving is paramount, even more so when dealing with changing weather conditions. That's why we've put together some practical holiday safety tips to help you drive with confidence and peace of mind.

- Plan your route ahead of time.
- Ensure your vehicle is winter ready.
- Be aware of road conditions.
- Clear windows before driving.
- Wear your seatbelt
- Check the weather forecast for your route.
- Increase your following distance.
- Drive slowly with cruise control turned off..
- Pack an emergency car kit.
- Keep your fuel tank full.

Whether it's snow, sleet or ice, winter weather can cause extremely dangerous road conditions. In 2022 there were 498 fatal traffic crashes, and an estimated 32,213 injury crashes that occurred when there was snow/sleet conditions at the time of the crash. Preparing yourself – and your vehicle – for winter weather is key. Wherever you're heading this holiday season remember in ice and snow, take it slow.



Happy Holidays

FROM OH&S