



# Newsletter

DECEMBER 2007

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## How to Survive the Holidays...

We all know the dangers of the visiting relative at the holidays; from snide comments about your child rearing skills to rearranging your kitchen drawers. And you can't get through the holiday season without an ugly sweater scare from your great Aunt either. But these things we know how to survive, after all, we have been doing it for years.

Do you know how to keep your family safe from holiday specific injuries though?

The hustle and bustle of the holidays, from the decorating to the cooking to being the perfect host/hostess, often leaves little time to consider the added dangers all of these activities can produce.

Christmas trees alone cause over 400 fires annually, not to mention the cooking and candle related fires. Fires are not the only hazard either. Falls while decorating, shocks and electrocutions from lights, choking from candy and trinkets around the house...a lot of additional hazards pop up around the house this time

of year but they are not unmanageable.

By being mindful of our every day home safety rules and taking extra care to ensure our holiday traditions are done safely we can be sure our Holidays will be happy ones.

See the reverse of this newsletter for specific holiday safety tips and visit [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org) to stay up-to-date on everyday home safety.

## Partnership Updates and Upcoming Events

- The next quarterly meeting of the Partnership for a Safer Maryland will take place on February 5, 2008. More details to follow.



- Remember to send any injury/violence related legislation you may want to share with the group to the partnership e-mail address.

# Tips to Keep Your Home Safe During the Holidays

## Decorating

- Use only artificial trees that are fire resistant or fresh trees that are green with a trunk butt that is sticky with resin. Remember fresh trees will need lots of water.
- Keep all trees away from heat sources including fireplaces, space heaters and candles
- Avoid decorations that are sharp, breakable, have small removable parts or that resemble candy or food...all can be deadly for children.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Fasten outdoor lighting securely to trees, the house or other firm support to protect from wind damage.
- Remember to turn off all lights (on the tree, on the house or in the windows) before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Remove all wrapping papers from tree and fireplace areas immediately after presents are opened and never throw wrapping paper in the fireplace as they ignite suddenly and burn intensely.



## Cooking

Following the guidelines of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) everyday, but especially while preparing holiday feasts, will help reduce fire and burn related injuries and losses.

- Watch what you heat...never leave cooking food unattended.
- Keep your sleeves rolled up and your hair pulled back.
- Keep pets and children at least three feet away from the stove.
- Turn pot handles in so you can't bump them or kids can't grab them.
- PAY ATTENTION, don't cook if you are sleepy, you've been drinking alcohol excessively or if you are taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- Keep pot holders, food packaging, and dish towels off your stovetop.
- Wipe up spills and clean your oven regularly.
- Keep anything that burns away from your stove.
- If a grease fire does occur, smother the fire by sliding a lid over the pan and turn off the burner.



Visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) and [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org)  
for more holiday related safety tips

**Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!**

