



## SAFETY TIPS 2022 HOLIDAY SEASON



**T**he Holiday Season extends from Thanksgiving to New Years. Many will use this time to travel and visit with family and friends. Getting to your holiday destination and back to your unit safely must be everyone's goal. In addition to this being one of the busiest travel times of the year, potential winter weather conditions can complicate travel. Proper planning is crucial to minimize delays and maximize time with family and friends. Establish a back-up plan to enhance your holidays and mitigate stress. The following Tips are offered to assist in preparing for a safe Holiday Season:

**VEHICLE SAFETY:** Prior to long distance drives, use "TRiPS" to identify and mitigate risks. Be mindful of reduced daylight hours during winter months and drive with headlights on to enhance safety. Get plenty of sleep before driving. Avoid driving during normal sleep hours. Ensure all occupants wear seatbelts for duration of trip. Adhere to speed limit signs. Don't allow the gas gauge to drop below one-quarter tank. Never drive while impaired or distracted, or get into a vehicle with someone who has been drinking. Increase following distances in high traffic or poor road conditions. Avoid engaging in situations that could escalate into road rage. Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle.



**Note:** According to the National Safety Council, in 2020 it is estimated that 485 people died in the U.S. on Thanksgiving Day, 115 lost their lives on Christmas Day, and 163 died on New Year's Day. Alcohol impairment was involved in about a third (approx. 250) of these deaths. Don't Drink and Drive. Establish a designated driver before taking that first drink. Use an Uber, Lyft or taxi to get home safely. Monitor guests' alcohol intake and consider offering them a place to stay until sober to drive.

**COOKING SAFETY:** Know that unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires during the holiday season. Do not become distracted while cooking. If using a Turkey Fryer, follow safety precautions outlined by the manufacturer. Use turkey fryers outdoors on a flat, dry surface. Measure cooking oil before lowering turkey into the pot to avoid overflowing. Ensure Turkey is dry prior to lowering into hot oil. Keep kids and pets from coming in contact with turkey fryer while cooking. Ensure oil and turkey are maintained at proper temperatures. Use proper personal protective equipment to prevent burns.



**SHOPPING / HOLIDAY SAFETY:** Budget appropriately by setting realistic gift spending limits. Stay vigilant to surroundings when using ATM's or while gift shopping. Shop with a friend and avoid carrying large sums of cash. Keep purchased gifts in trunk or covered/out of site. Track packages being delivered and pick them up as soon as possible to deter theft. Save all purchase receipts and monitor credit card statements. Keep home window blinds closed and stop mail when on vacation. Set home lights on a timer to help deter theft, or entrust a reliable neighbor to check on your residence. Ensure you have a care plan for pets.

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**HOME SAFETY:** If decorating with a live tree, maintain water in the base. If using an artificial tree, check that it is labeled “fire resistant”. Keep trees away from fire places and candles. Use a helper when hanging lights and decorations. Ensure decorations don’t interfere with door exits or walking paths. Test home smoke alarms monthly and replace batteries annually. Never leave lit candles unattended. Keep a fire extinguisher readily available. Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year. Only use extension cords with approved safety labels. Unplug holiday lights when sleeping or while away from home. Do not post your travel schedule on social media.



**DID YOU KNOW:** The Consumer Product Safety Commission states that over 200 holiday decorating-related injuries occur each day during the holiday season – about half of them involve falls. Adhere to all ladder safety protocols, be aware of your surroundings, and avoid rushing.

**FIREWORKS SAFETY:** Every year thousands of people are injured handling fireworks, and many find their way into local emergency rooms. Over 80% of fireworks injuries involve hands, eyes and face. Never point a firework at a person or animal. If lighting off fireworks, keep a bucket of water or hose readily available. Know and follow your city and state firework ordinances. Do not use fireworks if consuming alcohol or in close proximity to flammable material. Animals have very sensitive ears and can be easily scared during fireworks. Keep our furry friends indoors during firework displays. Firearms should not be used in lieu of fireworks.

**HOLIDAY SEASON MISHAPS:** The following mishaps occurred over the past few holiday seasons:

- Cpl, on leave at family’s residence, suffered fatal injuries from a house fire.
- LCpl, while walking, was struck by a vehicle. Suffered severe injuries requiring surgery.
- E-6, while hanging lights, fell when ladder slide off house. Sustained a fractured wrist.
- PVT, suffered a leg injury from a negligent discharge while at home. Treated and released.
- Cpl, tending a bonfire, attempted to reignite using gasoline. Suffered burns to 11% of body.
- LCpl, lost control of truck due to poor visibility and fatigue. Sustained severe injuries.
- Sgt, while leaving base, lost control of sport bike and was ejected. Suffered a broken clavicle.
- Cpl, involved in single vehicle crash, cited for DUI, suffered severe facial injuries.

**Risk Management:** The goal of Risk Management (RM) is to identify hazards and mitigate risk. Use RM with all holiday planning. Remain in control of your schedule. Avoid over-extending yourself; be selective with holiday commitments. Eat healthy and maintain an exercise regimen. Self-evaluate stress levels; notify someone if feeling overwhelmed or depressed. Look after one another, show dignity and respect toward others, and adhere to our Corps values of Honor, Courage and Commitment!



**RESOURCES:**

- ❖ [Holiday Safety - National Safety Council \(nsc.org\)](http://nsc.org)
- ❖ [How to Deep Fry a Turkey in 6 Steps](#)
- ❖ [Holiday Safety | CPSC.gov](http://CPSC.gov)
- ❖ [TRiPS USMC Home \(army.mil\)](http://army.mil)
- ❖ [NHTSA Holiday Season Campaign](#)

**Manage the Risk**



**Protect the Force**