



Holiday Safety



Holiday safety is an issue that burns brightest from late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled and travel spikes. Take some basic precautions to ensure your family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season.

Traveling for the Holidays? Be Prepared

Many people choose to travel during the holidays by automobile, with the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation. In 2015, 355 people died on New Year's Day, 386 on Thanksgiving Day, and 273 on Christmas Day, according to Injury Facts 2017. Alcohol-impaired fatalities represent about one-third of the totals.

- Use a designated driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol, over-the-counter or illegal drugs all cause impairment
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up no matter how long or short the distance traveled
- Put that cell phone away; many distractions can occur while driving, but cell phones are the main culprit
- Properly maintain the vehicle and keep an emergency kit with you
- Be prepared for heavy traffic, and possibly heavy snow

IN THIS ISSUE

- Holiday Safety
- Winter Weather Awareness Week
- ReadyPA Tip Sheet: Winter Weather Checklist

Don't Give the Gift of Food Poisoning

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides some holiday food safety tips. Here are a few:

- Do not rinse raw meat and poultry before cooking
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature
- Refrigerate food within two hours
- Thanksgiving leftovers are safe for four days in the refrigerator
- Bring sauces, soups and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating
- When storing turkey, cut the leftovers in small pieces so they will chill quickly
- Wash your hands frequently when handling food



FOOD SAFETY

Holiday Safety (continued)

Cook with Caution



- Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire:

- On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.



If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire:

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number from outside the home.

DID YOU KNOW?



U.S. fire departments respond to an average of **166,100** home fires per year involving cooking equipment.

Thanksgiving is the leading day for home fires involving cooking equipment, with **4** times the average number.



Two-Thirds of American households cook at least one hot meal per day.

Something that could catch fire was too close to the equipment on **10%** of cooking fires and **23%** of deaths.



More than **one-third** of home decoration fires are started by candles.

42% of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.



Winter Weather Awareness Week (November 12 - 16)



From a record wet summer, we're quickly turning our attention to what kind of winter is in store for Pennsylvania. More warmth, more snow, ice storms? The National Weather Service (NWS) issued a winter outlook in mid-October calling for above average temperatures and near normal precipitation for the winter in Pennsylvania. While the three-month winter average may look manageable, don't expect a cold-free, snow-free winter either. Pennsylvanians know all too well

that we need to prepare for winter weather hazards, regardless of the long-term predictions. Check out some terms and tips below.

NWS Defines Winter Terms

- ♦ **Blizzard:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts of 35 mph or more with snow and blowing snow, frequently reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile for 3 hours or more.
- ♦ **Blowing Snow:** Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility. Blowing snow may be falling snow and/or snow on the ground can get picked up by the wind.
- ♦ **Snow Squalls:** Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant.
- ♦ **Snow Showers:** Snow falling at varying intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.
- ♦ **Flurries:** Light snow falling for short durations with little or no accumulation.
- ♦ **Freezing Rain:** Rain that freezes when it hits the ground; creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees and power lines.
- ♦ **Sleet:** Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.

Winter Weather Messages

Look for messages from the National Weather Service to alert you of upcoming winter weather hazards. The NWS can issue three levels of products, with warnings being the most serious threat level.

Snow Squalls – Driver Dangers!



THERE IS NO SAFE PLACE ON A HIGHWAY WHEN SNOW SQUALLS ARE APPROACHING

Snow squalls briefly produce sudden white-out conditions and can combine with falling temperatures to produce icy roads in just a few minutes. Squalls have resulted in numerous multi-vehicle accidents with death and injury in Pennsylvania.

How do you avoid the hazards of snow squalls? The only safe option is to avoid or delay travel. NWS now issues snow squall warnings due to the dangers associated with driving in snow squalls. Vendors offer options to sign up

for these alerts to your email and phone to help you plan your travel.

WATCH Be Prepared
ADVISORY Be Aware
WARNING Take Action

PEMA is Social!

Find us, visit us, like us, tweet us, retweet us!



Twitter

<https://twitter.com/ReadyPA>

<https://twitter.com/PEMAdirector>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/BeReadyPA>

PEMA Can Also be Found on the Web!

Be Informed, Be Prepared, and Be Involved!



www.Ready.PA.gov



pennsylvania

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

www.pema.pa.gov

Preparedness Events in November

Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month

(www.dhs.gov/cisr-month)

Military Family Month

(www.military.com/military-family-appreciation-month)

Winter Weather Awareness Week (11/12 to 11/18)

(www.weather.gov)

Additional Resources

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: www.pema.pa.gov

ReadyPA: www.Ready.PA.gov

SERVPA: www.Serv.PA.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov

Office of the State Fire Commissioner: www.osfc.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services: www.dhs.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Health: www.health.pa.gov

PA State Animal Response Team: www.pasart.us

PA Department of Transportation: www.penndot.gov

PA511Connect: www.511pa.com

Pennsylvania State Police: www.psp.pa.gov



Are you Ready^{PA}?

ACTION SHEET

Winter Weather Checklist



Maintain heating equipment with annual cleanings



Insulate your home by installing Storm Windows or adding Plastic covering

Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing



Wear waterproof boots to keep warm and dry and maintain your footing



Bring pets indoors during winter



Avoid black ice on the roads by looking for a slight sheen on the surface of the road



Listen to the news or the national weather service for critical info

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, also known as LIHEAP, opens November 1, 2018.

LIHEAP helps families living on low incomes pay their heating bills in the form of a cash grant. Crisis grants also are for households in immediate danger of being without heat. With cash grants, a one-time payment is sent directly to the utility company/fuel provider, and will be credited on your bill. Cash grants range from \$200 to \$1,000 based on household size, income, and fuel type. Remember: This is a grant and does not have to be repaid. For further information on LIHEAP or to apply for assistance, go to www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap/index.htm.



LIHEAP