

- \* Plan your trip to include rest stops.
- \* Leave an itinerary with a trusted individual.
- \* Get plenty of rest before driving.
- \* Buckle your safety belt and use child safety seats.

### Safe Shopping

- \* Avoid carrying large bulky packages that block your vision or may cause you to fall.
- \* Use services offered by many stores such as an escort to your car or delivery to your office.
- \* Keep money or credit cards separate from wallets or purses.
- \* Keep purse or wallet closed and close to your body at all times. If possible, conceal under your coat.

### Holiday Stress

- \* Make a list and plan your time and money. Stick to it.
- \* Don't overcommit. List favorite holiday activities and pick those you most want to attend.
- \* Enlist help from family members and friends for entertaining, shopping, etc.
- \* Use idle time or time alone to spread the true spirit of the season – giving.
- \* Seek the help of a professional when stress becomes unmanageable.



Texas Department  
of Insurance wishes  
everyone a safe and  
healthy holiday season.



**Texas Department of Insurance  
Division of Workers' Compensation**

**[www.tdi.state.tx.us](http://www.tdi.state.tx.us)**

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**Safety Violations Hotline**

1-800-452-9595

# Holiday Safety Tips



The Texas Department of Insurance urges Texas employers to remind their employees to practice safety on and off the job during the holidays. This busy season is full of “things to do” lists for home and work. Hazardous travel, crowded stores, dangerous decorations and holiday parties combined with higher stress can result in accidents and injuries. Employers should emphasize safety when planning business-related holiday parties, decorating the workplace, or sending employees on business-related travel. Here are some suggestions on how to enjoy a safe and happy holiday.

### **Christmas Tree**

- \* Carefully choose a tree that is not too dry—one without loose needles. Check a branch near the base. Bend needles to make sure they do not break.
- \* To preserve tree’s freshness, cut a one- or two-inch diagonal slice off the bottom.
- \* Place tree in a sturdy stand and check water level daily.
- \* Keep tree away from heat sources (vents, fireplace, etc.) to avoid drying.
- \* Place tree in a low-traffic area. Don’t block entrances or exits.
- \* Place tree outside soon after the holidays and recycle – do not burn it.
- \* At the end of the holidays, wash and store artificial trees in plastic bags.

### **Lights**

- \* Examine holiday lights before hanging them. Replace any missing or broken parts, check by setting lights on a nonflammable surface and leave plugged in for 10-15 minutes to see that the lights don’t melt or smoke.
- \* Keep lights away from curtains or flammable materials.
- \* Make sure cords and plugs do not come in contact with water.
- \* To prevent overheating, pinching and fraying, do not run cords under carpet, rugs, or behind furniture.
- \* Never connect more than three sets of lights to an extension cord.
- \* Unplug all lights before you leave the house or office or go to bed.

### **Workplace Decorations**

- \* Keep garlands and fragile glass ornaments out of the reach of visiting children.
- \* Check older ornaments to ensure they are free of toxic materials such as lead paint.

### **Fireplaces & Other Fire Hazards**

- \* Always use a fire screen.
- \* Don’t burn trash in the fireplace because it can create toxic fumes or uncontrollable fires.
- \* Don’t wear loose clothing or synthetic materials prone to melting when tending a fire.

- \* Keep flue open until all embers have burned out.
- \* Dispose of ashes in a metal container.
- \* Make sure the fire is out before leaving the workplace or going to bed.
- \* Keep lit candles away from curtains and out of reach of children.
- \* Never place lit candles on or near a Christmas tree.
- \* Check smoke detectors once a month.

### **Holiday Food**

- \* Keep hands and work areas clean and free of contaminants.
- \* Keep hot foods hot and cool foods cool.
- \* Cook food thoroughly and store promptly to avoid food poisoning.

### **Business-related Holiday Parties**

- \* Designate a driver or volunteer to be the nondrinker.
- \* If you drink alcohol, don’t drink more than one drink per hour.
- \* Don’t drink alcohol on an empty stomach or while taking medication.

### **Holiday Traveling**

- \* Winterize your vehicle.
- \* Carry a winter survival kit, including warm gear, nonperishable foods, and first-aid items.