

Safety Tips to Make Your Holidays Happy this Season

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CHICAGO –The next two weeks will be filled with travel, cooking, gifting and togetherness for many Americans, but there are also risks that come along with the hustle and bustle of the season.

“The holidays can be a busy time for many people, but don’t let it distract you from taking simple precautions to ensure your family stays safe into the new year,” said FEMA Region V Administrator James K. Joseph. “Be a prepared traveler, and if you’re staying home for the holidays, prevent house fires with smart decorating, heating and cooking practices.”

Keep the stress at a minimum this holiday season by following a few simple safety tips:

- **Be a prepared traveler.** Know the risk of inclement weather for your trip before you leave home. Listen to the radio or television for the latest weather forecasts and road conditions. If bad weather is forecast, drive only if necessary and keep your gas tank at least half full at all times. Talk with family about who to call and where to meet in an emergency. Visit www.ready.gov/plan for tips to get started.
- **Pack an emergency supply kit.** If you’re driving, keep an [emergency supply kit in your vehicle](#) with necessities you may need in case you’re stranded somewhere. If you’re packing for a flight or train ride, consider a small kit in case of emergency: flashlight, batteries, & a spare USB power bank.
- **Protect against home fire risks.** Put working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on every level of your home and inside and outside sleeping areas. Before guests arrive for the holidays check your smoke and CO alarm batteries. Also, keep in mind: more than half of home decoration fires in December are started by candles. Think about using battery-operated flameless candles this season. If that isn’t an option, place candles at least 12 inches away from anything that burns and ensure they cannot be reached by children or pets.



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- **Practice smart cooking.** Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling, or boiling food and turn pot handles toward the back of the stove so they won't get bumped. Clean cooking equipment after each use—crumbs in a toaster or grease on the stove can catch on fire.
- **Heat your home safely.** Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from fireplaces, wood stoves, portable heaters and radiators. When you leave a room or go to bed, turn heaters off or unplug them.

For more readiness tips, visit www.ready.gov , www.usfa.fema.gov, or download [FEMA's free app](#), available for your Android, Apple or Blackberry device.

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