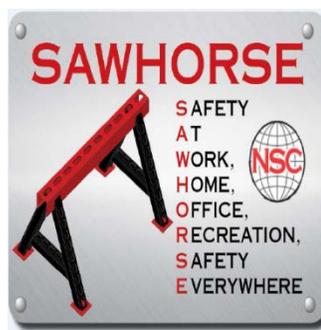




**PIPEFITTERS**



**ELECTRICIANS**



**CARP ~ LAB**



**IW ~ BM ~ OP**

## **NSC ~ SAWHORSE ADVISORY #7 – December, 2015**

As we approach Christmas and the New Year, the management of **NSC** is pleased to offer this **SAWHORSE ADVISORY** highlighting a few relevant safety tips and suggestions appropriate for the season. This is part of our continuing effort to ensure that our workforce remains as safe as humanly possible, both on and off the **NSC** worksites. This safety advice and much more is available from the National Safety Council on their website at [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org) and we encourage all employees to search this site if any safety related questions arise; not only now, but all throughout the year.

### **TRAVEL**

Many people choose to travel during the holidays by automobile, resulting in the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation. Things to keep in mind as you drive to Grandmother's house include, but are not limited to:

- Clear your windows, lights and roof of snow to ensure you have maximum visibility and avoid creating a hazard for the vehicle behind you
- Look further ahead in traffic for actions by cars and trucks that will alert you quicker to problems and give you a split-second extra time to react safely
- Slow down and leave plenty of stopping room, since it takes more time and distance to stop in adverse conditions
- Be aware of bridges and exit ramps as bridge decks freeze first due to the difference in the exposure to air, and exit ramps are an even greater challenge since they may have received less anti-icing material than the main road
- Buckle up, your seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 45% and are a simple way to increase your safety on the road, no matter how long or short the distance being traveled
- Don't use the "cruise control" because even roads that appear clear can have sudden slippery spots and the slightest touch of your brakes to deactivate the cruise control can cause you to lose control of your vehicle
- Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle. Remember that 4 wheel drive may help you get going quicker but it won't help you stop any quicker
- Be aware of truck blind spots and remember that if you can't see the truck driver in his or her mirrors, then the truck driver can't see you
- Do not cut in front of large trucks because they are heavier and take longer to make a complete stop, so avoid cutting quickly in front of them
- 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
- Put that cell phone away; distracted driving causes one-quarter of all crashes

### **GIFT SELECTION**

We've all heard it's important when choosing toys for infants or small children to avoid small parts that can be pulled or broken off and might prove to be a choking hazard. Here are some additional gift-related safety tips you might not have heard about:

- Select gifts for older adults that are not heavy or awkward to handle
- Be aware of dangers associated with "coin" type lithium batteries; of particular concern is the ingestion of button batteries
- For answers to more of your holiday toy safety questions, check out the Consumer Product Safety Commission blog
- Make sure that none of your toy purchases have been recalled

## FOOD PREPARATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Here are a few holiday food safety tips:

- 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, be sure to cut the leftovers in small pieces so it will chill quicker
- Wash your hands frequently when handling food

The other NSC (National Safety Council) discourages the use of turkey fryers at home and urges those who prefer fried turkey to seek out professional establishments or consider a new oil-less turkey fryer. But for those who don't heed that advice, please follow these precautions:

- Set up the fryer more than 10 feet from the house and keep children away
- Find flat ground; the oil must be even and steady to ensure safety
- Use a thawed and dry turkey; any water will cause the oil to bubble furiously and spill over
- Fryer lid and handle can become very hot and cause burns
- Have a fire extinguisher ready at all times

## CANDLES AND FIREPLACES

About 2,200 deaths were caused by fires, burns and other fire-related injuries in 2013, according to Injury Facts 2015, and 12% of home candle fires occur in December, the National Fire Protection Association reports. Increased use of candles and fireplaces, combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations present in many homes means more risk for fire:

- Never leave burning candles unattended or sleep in a room with a lit candle
- Keep candles out of reach of children
- Make sure candles are on stable surfaces
- Don't burn candles near trees, curtains or any other flammable items
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace
- Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year

## DECORATIONS

Putting up decorations is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, however an estimated 15,000 injuries involving holiday decorating were seen in emergency rooms during the 2012 season. By now many folks have completed their decorations, but here are a few items to check:

- Decorate the tree with your kids in mind; move ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks toward the top
- If you have a "live" tree, make sure to keep it well watered
- Lights are among the best parts of holiday decorating; make sure there are no exposed or frayed wires, loose connections or broken sockets
- Plants can spruce up your holiday decorating, but keep those that may be poisonous (including some Poinsettias) out of reach of children or pets; the national Poison Control Center can be reached at (800) 222-1222
- Make sure paths are clear indoors so older adults do not trip on wrapping paper, decorations, toys, etc.; NSC provides tips for older adults on slip, trip and fall protections

The same safety cautions generally apply to taking down decorations when the time comes, and we all need to be especially cautious when dealing with elevated decorations:

- Never stand on chairs or other furniture to reach overhead items
- Always use the proper step ladder and follow the safety labels provided by the manufacturer and never stand on the top step/rung of a ladder
- Make sure your ladder has a solid, stable base and get help stabilizing the ladder if you need it
- If the support is at all questionable, secure both the top and bottom of the ladder
- Maintain the proper straight ladder orientation – 4 to 1 ratio of height to base offset; that is 2.5 feet back for a 10 foot rise and extend the ladder at least 3 feet above the top bearing elevation
- Keep your body centered on the ladder and facing the ladder, with three points of contact (two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand)

***Best Regards and have a Safe-Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year,***

***The NSC Management Team***