

Safety And Health For The Holidays

Acknowledgements: *National Fire Protection Association*
Northline Express
US Consumer Product Safety Commission

It's hard to believe it, but the holiday season is just around the corner and with that comes the end of another year. In preparation for the season, consider these helpful tips:

Safety In The Office

- The use of space heaters is not recommended in the office. If you must use a space heater, make sure it has a working heat shield/guard. Plug the heater directly into the wall with no extension cord. Never leave the heater unattended, keep it at least 3 feet away from other objects, and periodically check the heater for safe operation.
- Christmas decorations should be arranged so that the path of exit is not compromised. Live Christmas trees are not allowed. Use lighting with cool bulbs that have a UL listing.
- Take a moment to inspect your office furniture. Chairs, desks, or tables with loose/broken components should be repaired or discarded. Make sure file cabinet and desk drawers have a safety stop that prevents them from rolling out and causing injury.
- Refresh yourself with the emergency floor plan located in your building. This laminated document has evacuation routes, location of fire extinguishers, ADA information, and other valuable pieces of information.
- Finally, contact the personnel department at x26242 or personnel@louisiana.edu with your current emergency contact information. This information may have changed since you were hired and could help in the event of an emergency.

Safety In The Home

- If not already done, purchase a Type ABC fire extinguisher and learn how to use it. Check or change the battery in your smoke detector(s) now and remember to do so twice per year. If your house utilizes natural gas, purchase a carbon monoxide detector and install it according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Make sure your fireplace is cleaned regularly. Using a flashlight, visually inspect the chimney. If you see black soot attached to the chimney, have it serviced by a professional. Re-inspect and service every 2 or 3 years for best and safest results.
- Have your home's heating system inspected every 3 – 5 years by a professional technician who can clean your heater and ensure a warm and safe winter.

Safety In The Car

- Check your vehicle's tires for proper inflation and adequate tread. Have the brakes inspected and serviced as necessary.
- Don't leave the engine running while you are stopped for prolonged periods or in any closed area. Carbon monoxide is an odorless and potentially deadly substance.
- Don't use cell phones at the fueling station. Static electricity mixed with gasoline fumes can cause explosive results.
- Don't consume alcohol and drive. Call a friend or call a taxicab – it's just not worth it.