

## Travel

Get vehicles ready for work or holiday travel in cold weather by:

- servicing the radiator and topping off the antifreeze level;
- checking tires and replacing them with all-weather or snow tires if needed;
- keeping the gas tank full and the battery charged;
- using a winter windshield washer formula; and
- putting a winter emergency kit in the vehicle that contains:
  - \* a cell phone and portable hand-crank charger;
  - \* blankets;
  - \* food and water;
  - \* booster cables, flares, a tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter for traction;
  - \* a compass and paper maps;
  - \* a flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries; and
  - \* a first-aid kit.



## Seasonal Hiring

- If you are hiring extra workers for the holidays, start the process early to allow time to do full background checks on new hires and to give temporary workers a full safety and health orientation.
- Check new workers' experience levels before assigning and training them to do a task. Have more experienced employees work with new workers until they can do the job on their own. The more experience and training a worker has, the less likely he or she is to be injured on the job.



[www.txsafetyatwork.com](http://www.txsafetyatwork.com)

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# Holiday Safety Tips





The year-end holidays are a time of fun and reflection, but they can also add hazards to workplaces. Take these steps to help workers stay safe from injury and illness on the job during this busy season.

## Decorations

- Think about fire hazards when deciding where to place holiday lights. Keep lights away from heat sources, curtains, and other flammable materials. Place lights away from doors and windows.
- Choose flame-resistant or flame-retardant decorations.
- Ban candles or other open flames in the office.
- Use the right lights for the setting. Check the box or label to see if the lights are listed for use indoors, outdoors, or both. Use GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter) outlets for outdoor power.
- Use mini or LED lights that operate cooler.
- Replace strings of lights that have loose bulb connections, or worn or broken cords.
- To prevent overheating, pinching, and fraying, do not run cords under carpet, rugs, or furniture.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands you can connect.
- Use clips to hang lights. Nails or staples can damage cords.



- Keep sets of lights to no more than 1,400 watts per outlet. Never remove the ground pin on an extension cord.
- Make sure electrical cords and plugs do not touch water.
- Unplug all lights before leaving the office each day. Assign one person and a backup to ensure lights are unplugged.
- Do not use "angel hair" (glass wool) decorations that can irritate the eyes and skin, or spray-on snowflakes that can hurt the lungs if inhaled. These decorations can catch on fire when used.
- Check older ornaments to ensure they don't contain lead paint or other toxic chemicals.
- Use step stools or ladders when hanging decorations. Do not climb on chairs or other furniture.
- Use the event of decorating your office to check that fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and other pieces of fire-safety equipment are in good working order.
- Make sure paths are clear of decorations, wrapping paper, and other slip, trip, or fall hazards.

## Office Parties

- Serving alcohol at office holiday parties is not recommended.
- If alcohol is served, arrange for guests to get home with a designated driver, taxi, ride-sharing service, or other means.
- Keep people safe from food poisoning at office holiday parties by:
  - \* washing cooking and preparation surfaces well and often;
  - \* washing hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds under running water, or using hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available;
  - \* avoiding cross-contamination by keeping eggs, raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces, and by not rinsing raw meat and poultry before cooking;
  - \* using a meat thermometer to cook foods to their correct temperatures; and
  - \* refrigerating leftovers promptly, so perishable foods are not left out longer than two hours.

