HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) remind everyone that home fires are more prevalent in winter than in any other season, due in part to an increase in cooking and heating fires. Holiday decorations and electrical service interruptions due to winter storms also increase risk of fire in winter.

The following tips can help maintain a safe home and office this season.

• Inspect holiday lights for damaged wires or sockets and excessive kinking or wear before hanging them.
• Do not link more than three light strands unless the directions indicate it is safe to do so. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Periodically check the wires to ensure that they are not warm to the touch.
• Do not leave holiday lights on unattended.
• Decorations should be non-flammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.
• Trees and other holiday decorations should not block an exit. In the event of a fire, time is critical. A blocked entry/exit puts your family at risk.
• Consider using battery-operated flameless candles that can look, smell, and feel like real candles.
• If you use lit candles, make sure they are in stable holders, 12 inches from anything that can burn, and cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave a room or go to bed with candles burning. Remember that candles are prohibited in all buildings on campus.
• Do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame.
• Do not use the kitchen oven/range to heat your home. It is a fire hazard and can be a source of toxic fumes.
• Keep anything flammable at least three feet away from space heaters. Make sure your alternative heaters have ‘tip switches’ that automatically turn off when they tip over.
• Make sure wood stoves are properly installed and at least three feet away from anything flammable. Ensure they have proper floor support and adequate ventilation.
• Use a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace to prevent embers from igniting nearby carpets, furniture or other flammable items. Never put wrapping paper in the fireplace. It may throw off dangerous sparks that could result in a chimney fire.
• Use a flashlight - not a candle - for emergency lighting.
• Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, especially inside and outside sleeping areas. Test all smoke alarms monthly, and replace batteries at least once a year.

Source: The US Fire Administration
http://www.usfa.fema.gov
As you make plans for holiday travel, review these driving tips to stay safe on the road.

- Be prepared. Keep your vehicle maintained and ready for colder temperatures. Check your tires, battery, fluid levels, ignition system, lights, heater, cooling system, and wipers prior to traveling. Keep safety equipment in your car for emergencies: blankets, first-aid kit, flares, flashlight, jumper cables, ice scraper, gloves, water, food, etc. You can check Texas road conditions by visiting http://www.drivetexas.org.

- Wear your seat belt. All passengers must be secured by a seat belt or approved child safety seat.

- Remember you will be sharing the road with other vehicles. Be patient and allow extra time for delays. Obey all traffic laws and watch for signs for construction, road delays, or detour routes. On some multi-lane highways, you must move out of the left lane after you have safely passed another vehicle or you may receive a citation for impeding traffic.

- Watch for speed limit signs, and always drive for the conditions. When visibility or road conditions change due to low light, rain, fog, snow, or road construction, adjust your speed accordingly and increase the distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Use your vehicle’s low beam headlights and your wipers and defroster to keep windows clear.

- Ice forms first on bridges, overpasses, and shady areas. If you hit a patch of ice or your car begins to skid, take your foot off the gas pedal and do not hit the brake. Steer gently in the direction you want the front of the car to go. As the car straightens, you should regain traction and control. If conditions become too dangerous to continue, pull completely off the roadway and turn on emergency flashers.

- Keep your eyes on the road. Avoid distractions, and do not text and drive. Prevent drowsy driving on long trips by giving yourself a break every two hours. Find an area to safely pull over and stretch. Avoid driving between midnight and 6 AM, and get plenty of rest before your trip. Take advantage of the safe rest areas and travel information centers available.

- If you see emergency lights approaching, pull over and stop until they have passed. As you approach a stopped vehicle with flashing lights, you must move one lane away or slow down to 20 mph below the speed limit.

- Do not drink and drive. Even small amounts of alcohol can impair your reaction time.

- In an emergency, call the Texas Department of Public Safety Stranded/Disabled Motorist Hotline at 1-800-525-5555.

Source: http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/tle/traveltips.htm

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**EHS REQUIRED TRAINING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Topic</th>
<th>Hazard Communication</th>
<th>Intro to Lab Safety</th>
<th>Lab-Specific Training</th>
<th>HazMat Shipping</th>
<th>Radiation Safety</th>
<th>Respiratory Protection</th>
<th>Utility Vehicle Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Needs It</td>
<td>Anyone working with chemicals</td>
<td>New lab employees</td>
<td>Anyone working in a lab</td>
<td>Anyone who packages, ships, or receives hazardous material</td>
<td>Anyone working in a radiation lab</td>
<td>Anyone wearing a respirator (N-95, half-face, full-face, PAPR, or SCBA)</td>
<td>Anyone operating a golf cart, Gator® tractor, or other utility vehicle on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to Take It</td>
<td>In-Class or Online</td>
<td>In-Class</td>
<td>In your lab, provided by your PI</td>
<td>In-Class or Online (dry ice only)</td>
<td>In-Class</td>
<td>In-Person or Online (PAPR only)</td>
<td>In-Class (groups) or Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Texas A&M students, faculty, and staff, we are accustomed to receiving notifications of mandatory trainings through the TrainTraq system. These include topics regarding ethics, information security awareness, and discrimination. There may also be a safety-related training course you are required to take, depending on your activities or employment on campus. Check the chart above for more information, and contact EHS at 845-2132 if you have any questions.
This year's EHS Stream Clean event on October 6th resulted in 102 volunteers picking up 78 bags of garbage, plus a ladder, city garbage can, and half a bicycle! Thank you all for your participation!

A LOOK BACK AT FALL 2012

Fall is a busy time of year for Environmental Health & Safety. Take a look at some successful events we had on campus this semester.

A mock dorm room lit up Simpson Drill Field in a demonstration as part of Campus Safety Awareness Week. Firefighters put out the fire after 200 students watched how fast their room can erupt with smoke and flames.

Aggieland’s National Night Out (NNO)

Against Crime:

NNO 2012 was a success for 400 student residents and staff who attended the event at University Apartments. TEEX Fire School, EMS, UPD, EHS, and Residence Life were just a few of the participating organizations. Over 100 prizes were given away to participants. Special thanks to the NNO Committee, donors, volunteers, and resource table groups who made this event a success.

A mock dorm room lit up Simpson Drill Field in a demonstration as part of Campus Safety Awareness Week. Firefighters put out the fire after 200 students watched how fast their room can erupt with smoke and flames.

DORM BURN

10/2/2012

Can you count how many times the symbol appears in this newsletter? Email your answer to safetydispatch@tamu.edu for a chance to win a prize. Look closely!

WIN A PRIZE!

December: Safe Toys & Gifts Month
December 24-January 1: University Holiday
January: National Blood Donor Month
January 8: EHS/UPD Blood Drive (call 845-2132 to donate)
February 3-9: National Burn Awareness Week

DATES OF INTEREST

December: Safe Toys & Gifts Month
December 24-January 1: University Holiday
January: National Blood Donor Month
January 8: EHS/UPD Blood Drive (call 845-2132 to donate)
February 3-9: National Burn Awareness Week

CAMPUS SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

In September, students, faculty, and staff participated in activities promoting emergency preparedness. 91 people stopped by to learn Sidewalk CPR! Other activities included Active Shooter Training, Business Continuity Planning, Facility Manager Safety Training, and the 4th Annual Dorm Burn.

STREAM CLEAN

This year's EHS Stream Clean event on October 6th resulted in 102 volunteers picking up 78 bags of garbage, plus a ladder, city garbage can, and half a bicycle! Thank you all for your participation!
**SAFETY SOUND OFF**

Congratulations to One Love for being chosen for this season’s Safety Sound Off! One Love is a student organization at Texas A&M that provides numerous volunteers every year for EHS’s Stream Clean. This fall 43 students from One Love participated in the trash collection event. Thank you, One Love, for helping to keep our campus clean and green!

Know someone who applies good health and safety practices at TAMU? Send their name, work department, and reason why we should feature them in our next Safety Sound Off to safetydispatch@tamu.edu.

**WHAT’S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?**

Can you name the hazards in this winter scene? Email your answers to safetydispatch@tamu.edu for a chance to win a prize! Congratulations to Karen Sears for winning the fall Sudoku contest with the lucky number 7. She received a harbor blanket and a MagLite® flashlight.

**SAFETY DISPATCH**

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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Website: http://ehsd.tamu.edu

Newsletter Committee: Jodi Amos, Dee Donovan, Toni Eubanks, Monica Hartman, Swati Kale, Alicia McGirr, Kristen Robinson, Alvin Walker, Monica Weintraub, Marianna Wood.

EHS Director: John Salsman

**EHS Training Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Radiation Safety</td>
<td>12/12, 1/23, 2/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous Materials Shipping General Awareness</td>
<td>1/17, 2/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Laboratory Safety</td>
<td>1/3, 1/9, 2/5, 2/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please call 845-2132 to inquire about additional courses, training videos, or any of the following topics: Fire Extinguishers, Hazard Communication, Hearing Protection, Respiratory Protection, Laser Safety, Forklift Safety, Accident Investigation, Utility Cart Training, Asbestos Awareness.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Bryan and College Station have a curbside recycling program for Christmas trees. During the week after Christmas, you may leave your tree on the curb separate from your other garbage and they will pick it up for free. If you do not live in the city limits, you may take your tree to BVSWMA at no charge.

According to Guinness World Records, the largest fireworks display (66,326 fireworks) was achieved by Macedo’s Pirotecnia LDA in Portugal in 2006.

There are two types of smoke alarms—one detects slow smoldering fires and the other detects fast-burning flames. Having the proper kind could save the lives of your loved ones. For maximum protection, use both detectors or purchase a dual-detector that uses both technologies. To learn more, watch the video at http://tinyurl.com/c6ypah6.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**