

# HOMESAFETYMATTERS

WINTER 2022-23

## HOLIDAY LIGHTING

When you take it down is your business, but do it safely



Whether you take your holiday lights down right after the holiday or wait a few weeks, remember that safety comes first. You may have put the lights up on one of those still-nice fall days, but there is a good chance you will be taking them down in sub-freezing temperatures.

Here are five basic rules for ladder safety from the Alliance Safety Council to keep in mind before you begin:

- **Use the right ladder for the job.** Check for proper load capacity for the job. Make sure it is long enough to work from without using the top three feet.
- **Inspect the ladder before and after use.** Check for stability, loose parts,

rung condition and dirt and grease. Keep it away from electrical wiring.

- **Set up the ladder correctly.** A straight ladder should be one foot away from the wall or vertical surface for every four feet of height. Make sure it is properly tied off if you intend to climb onto the roof.
- **Climb and descend with caution.** Stay near the middle and hold on to the siderail with at least one hand. Carry tools on a belt and keep at least three limbs on the ladder.
- **Be safe and use common sense.** Don't lean outside the ladder rails. Keep the area free of clutter. Never place a ladder on unstable bases. Do not move or lift a ladder with a person or equipment on the ladder.

## SHOVEL WITH CARE

Listen to your body when it says you need to take a break

Nationwide, snow shoveling is responsible for as many as 100 deaths a year and thousands of injuries, according to the National Safety Council.

Sudden exertion, particularly after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart. Cold weather can increase blood pressure and the heart rate. Those over 40 or who are relatively inactive should be extra careful.



The NSC's recommendations:

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow and stretch beforehand.
- Push the snow rather than lifting it.
- If you must lift, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- With heavier snow, lift less snow than you would with powdery snow.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion.
- Know the signs of a heart attack. If you experience them, stop immediately and call 911.

## FALLING THROUGH ICE

### Know what to do and how

These tips from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources could save your life:

1. Stay calm. It's not easy but you only have about 10 minutes before your body gets too cold to pull yourself out of the water.

2. Let your winter clothes act as a buoy. Your winter clothes can actually hold warm air to temporarily fend off hypothermia and help you float.

3. Turn back in the direction you came from because that's probably the strongest ice.

4. Place your hands and arms on an unbroken surface to lift yourself. You may have to first lift yourself

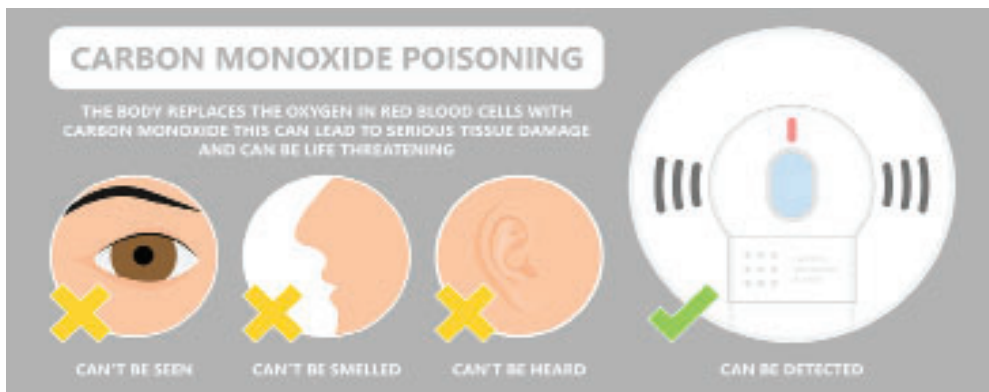
partially out of the water to let water drain from your clothing before starting forward.

5. Lie flat on the ice to spread your weight. Standing may cause the ice to crack again. Roll away from the hole.

5. Get to a warm place and change clothes. Seek medical attention if necessary.



RUDOLPH LIBBE INC  
GEM INC  
GEM ENERGY  
RUDOLPH LIBBE PROPERTIES



With people spending more time indoors during the cold months, it is important to make sure your home is protected from carbon monoxide (CO) emissions.

CO can come from a faulty furnace or hot water heater, improperly vented fireplace

## WINTER VEHICLE SAFETY

### Be prepared if you get stuck

Each year, over 1,300 people are killed and more than 116,800 people are injured in vehicle crashes on snowy, slushy, or icy pavements, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

Here are some tips recommended by the CDC to help you be prepared for winter driving:

- Check the tread on your tires and replace as necessary.
- Keep the gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime formula in your windshield washer.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded. The kit should include:
  - ◊ Portable cell phone charger/power brick.
  - ◊ Items to stay warm, such as hats, coats, mittens, blankets or sleeping bags.
  - ◊ Food and water.
  - ◊ Booster cables, flares, tire pump and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction).
  - ◊ Flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries.
  - ◊ First-aid kit.
  - ◊ Plastic bags (for sanitation).

or other sources. In addition to smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors are critical because it is a gas that cannot be seen, smelled or heard.

For as little as \$25 for a monitor, it could be a life-saving investment.

## FROSTBITE

### Warm up before it's too late

The Mayo Clinic defines frostbite as an injury caused by the “freezing of the skin and underlying tissues.” The first stage of frostbite is called frostnip, and it usually does not cause permanent injury.

As frostbite worsens, skin may become hard or waxy-looking. Exposed skin in cold, windy weather is most vulnerable to frostbite, but it can also affect covered skin. You may not realize you have frostbite until someone else points it out.

After frostnip, all other frostbite requires medical attention because it can permanently damage skin, muscle, bone and other tissue.



## RLG WELLNESS COMMITTEE

### Food for Thought: Reasons to eat your veggies!

When it comes to eating vegetables — Mom was right. They're good for you!

#### Did you know?

- Vegetables are full of essential vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that provide many important health benefits to your body.
- Green leafy vegetables also contain vitamin K which is believed to prevent calcium from building up in your arteries.
- Vegetables are a good source of dietary fiber, a type of carbohydrate that helps pass food through your digestive system.

Easy ways to incorporate vegetables in your diet:

- Cook onions, peppers and zucchini together for a vegetable kabob meal.
- Roast your tomatoes in the oven with olive oil, parmesan cheese and basil.
- Create a fresh Mediterranean garden salad with lettuce, sweet peas, peppers and cherry tomatoes.
- Try a mixed salad with kale, cabbage and brussels sprouts.
- Fry vegetables with olive oil in a wok with chicken or tofu to create a delicious stir-fry.
- Create a vegetable melt by adding asparagus, mushrooms and peppers to toasted cheese bread.