

News & Notes

AUTUMN HOME MAINTENANCE SAFETY TIPS

Fall is the time for yard clean-ups and readying your house for the cold winter ahead. Keep these safety tips in mind as you work.

Look Up Before Pruning Trees

If you have decided that your yard needs to be spruced up by trimming your trees, be sure to look up and survey the area carefully before you start. Make careful note of where power lines are located before you set up your ladder so that it is positioned away from them. Wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - gloves and eye protection and use the proper tools for tree and bush pruning. Be sure to dispose of the cut branches in a safe manner.

Use Caution on Ladders

Wearing appropriate footwear is important when using a ladder; shoes or boots may be wet, causing you to slip as you climb the ladder. The ladder should be positioned on a flat surface before use. Be sure that the tools you are using are specifically designed for the purpose for which they are being used and are in good condition before starting work. Remember general ladder safety - check the safety of the ladder before using it; never step on the top step of any ladder; once the ladder is positioned be sure to check the stability of the ladder; be sure to move the ladder as you need to rather than stretching to reach another point; etc.

Clean Up Fallen Leaves

Keep your driveway and walkway clear of falling leaves. Wet leaves can create a hazard for pedestrians in the fall by making sidewalks slippery. Later in the season, snow may mix with leaves to increase the risk of falling. Homeowners should mulch or rake up fallen leaves and dispose of them according to local bylaws.



THANKSGIVING RIDDLES

- 1) Where do turkeys go to dance?
- 2) Why was the turkey the drummer in the band?
- 3) Why didn't the Pilgrims tell secrets in the corn field?
- 4) If the pilgrims were still alive today, what would they be famous for?
- 5) What's the difference between Thanksgiving and April Fool's Day?
- 6) What is Dracula's favorite holiday?

Answers on page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Matters



Produced by the Insurance Coverage Office

State of Delaware

Issue CXXXV

November 2017

Fall Season Safety Tips

As the air turns cooler and leaves drop from the trees, it's important to keep a few important fall safety tips in mind. With proper precautions and safety awareness, your family can enjoy that crisp autumn weather while avoiding some of the dangers that come with the season.

Service Your Furnace

Before the cold autumn and winter weather sets in, be sure to call your heating and cooling company to service your furnace. A specialist should inspect the furnace to make sure everything is in working order and that there are no leaks.

Use Fireplaces Safely

Keep that fire in its proper place by using a fireplace screen to keep sparks from flying out of the fireplace. Never leave a burning fire unattended, and make sure a fire in a fireplace is completely out before going to bed.

Use Caution with Space Heaters

A space heater can be an effective way to warm up a chilly room, but it's essential that you read the instructions on the unit before you use it. If your space heater requires venting, make sure you have vented it to the outdoors. Never use your stove or oven to heat your home; only use space heaters that are approved for this purpose. Always allow at least three feet of empty area around space heaters. Keep all flammable materials (drapes, curtains, furniture, etc.) away from space heaters.

Reconsider Leaf Burning

The latest scientific evidence indicates that burning leaves can produce dangerous and cancer-causing chemicals. Wherever possible homeowners should avoid disposing of leaves this way. If you decide to burn leaves, wear a protective mask. Burning leaves should only be attempted far away from a house or other structures on a homeowner's property. Always check the weather forecast before starting to burn leaves. This activity should not be attempted in windy conditions.

Exercise Candle Caution

Candles are a great way to give a room that warm glow, but they can also cause fires. According to the National Candle Association, almost 10,000 home fires start with improper candle use. Never leave candles burning if you go out or go to sleep, and keep your candles away from pets, children and all flammable materials.

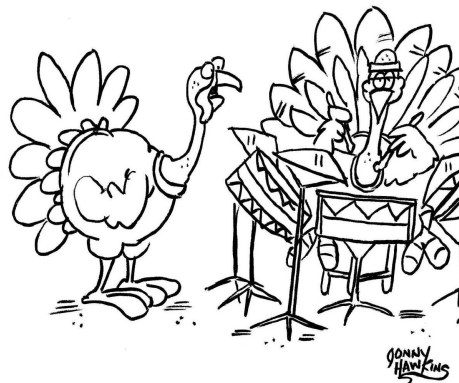
Change Smoke Alarm Batteries

Change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors when you turn back your clocks for Daylight Saving Time. Make sure to check the alarms with the new batteries installed. When replacing smoke alarms consider replacing them with a combination smoke/carbon monoxide detector. Check and replace any home fire extinguishers that are outdated and have expired/discharged.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

Here are some office safety tips:

- 1) Take regular breaks to get up and move around. Sitting all day puts workers at risk for numerous health problems.
- 2) When it is slippery due to ice and snow, walk like a penguin by walking flat footed taking short, slow steps when entering and leaving your office. It's important to wear sensible footwear and carry only what you can handle.
- 3) Keep your workplace tidy by cleaning up spills immediately, keeping aisles free of clutter and tying up or securing all cords so they don't pose a trip hazard.



"I'm glad you're in band. I'm just a little creeped out by the drumsticks."

Safety Bits & Pieces

THANKSGIVING SAFE FOOD HANDLING

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers these tips for a food safe Thanksgiving:

Tip 1: Don't wash that turkey! USDA does not recommend washing raw meat and poultry before cooking. Washing raw meat and poultry can cause bacteria to spread up to three feet away. Cooking (baking, broiling, boiling, frying or grilling) meat and poultry to the right temperature kills any bacteria that may be present, so washing meat and poultry is not necessary.

Tip 2: Use the refrigerator, the cold-water method or the microwave to defrost a frozen turkey. There are three safe ways to defrost a turkey: in the refrigerator, in cold water and in the microwave oven. Thawing food in the refrigerator is the safest method because the turkey will defrost at a consistent, safe temperature. It will take 24 hours for every 5 pounds of weight for a turkey to thaw in the refrigerator. To thaw in cold water, submerge the bird in its original wrapper in cold tap water, changing the water every 30 minutes. For instructions on microwave defrosting, refer to your microwave's owner's manual. Cold water and microwave thawing can also be used if your bird did not entirely defrost in the refrigerator.

Tip 3: Use a meat thermometer. The only way to determine if a turkey (or any meat, poultry or seafood) is cooked is to check its internal temperature with a food thermometer. A whole turkey should be checked in three locations: the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing and the thickest part of the breast. Your thermometer should register 165°F in all three of these places. The juices rarely run clear at this temperature, and when they do the bird is often overcooked. Using the food thermometer is the best way to ensure your turkey is cooked, but not overdone.

Tip 4: Leftovers are good in the refrigerator for up to four days. Take the turkey off the bone and refrigerate it as soon as you can, within 2 hours of the turkey coming out of the oven. Leftovers will last for four days in the refrigerator, so if you know you won't use them right away, pack them into freezer bags or airtight containers and freeze. For best quality, use your leftover turkey within four months. After that, the leftovers will still be safe, but can dry out or lose flavor.

THANKSGIVING RIDDLES ANSWERS

- 1) The Butter Ball!!
- 2) Because he already had the drumsticks!
- 3) Because the corn had ears!
- 4) Their age!!
- 5) On one you're thankful; on the other you're thankful!
- 6) Fangsgiving!



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



FALL DRIVING SAFETY TIPS

There's nothing more beautiful than a fall drive, but this season brings some unique hazards for drivers. Being aware of these potential dangers can help keep you and your family safe and prevent accidents.

Be Aware of Poor Visibility

Falling leaves, while beautiful, can obscure your vision, as can rain and fog. Shorter days are part of the fall season, making it more difficult to see children playing or people walking and riding bicycles. Be aware of limitations in your visibility, and slow down if you can't see well. Use your dimmed headlights in bad weather with decreased visibility. If possible, try not to be on the roads when it's hard to see.

Watch for Children

Children love to play in piles of leaves, so use extra caution where leaves are piled at curbside. In addition, the school bus will be making its rounds now that school is back in session. In addition to educating children about back-to-school safety, it's important to stay vigilant as a driver.

Slow Down on Wet Pavement

In many areas of the country, rain is common during the autumn. If it's raining, keep a safe distance from the car in front of you. Wet roads make it more difficult to stop. When wet leaves are on roadways, they make the pavement slippery, and it can be difficult for drivers to get good traction.

Be Prepared for Bright Sunlight

When sunrise occurs later in the morning, it can also present challenges for drivers. Have a pair of sunglasses in the vehicle to wear when the sun is bright is a good strategy. If it becomes too difficult to see because of bright sunlight or glare, a good strategy is for the driver to pull over until he or she can see again.

Watch Out for Ice

As the temperatures drop further at night, a driver will need to spend some extra time in the morning scraping frost off his or her vehicle. Shady spots on the roadway may be home to black ice, which a driver may not be aware of until his or her car starts to skid on it.

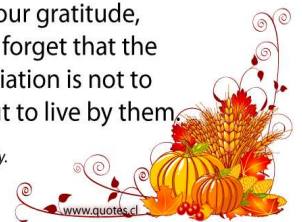


Sunday, Nov. 5 at 2am

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

- John Fitzgerald Kennedy.



SAFETY TIPS FOR FALL BOATERS

According to a report from the US Coast Guard, autumn boating accidents are far more likely to be fatal than those that occur during the summer months. Although there are many more boating accidents in the summer season, boaters involved in accidents during the fall months are exposed to cold water and other weather hazards. Keep these tips in mind for safe autumn boating.

Be Prepared for Changing Weather

Since fall weather can change quickly, you should always be prepared for possible cold, windy, and wet weather even if the sun is shining. Stay closer to shore, so you can turn back if the weather changes. Bring appropriate clothing, such as warm coats, rain gear, and gloves.

Watch for Signs of Hypothermia

Small open boats combined with cold, wet weather can lead to possible hypothermia. According to the Mayo Clinic, these are a few of the signs you should know:

- Shivering or trembling
- General lack of coordination, including stumbling and dropping things
- Drowsiness, confusion, apathy; mumbling and slurring of words
- Weak pulse and shallow breathing

Tell Others About Your Trip

Make sure you tell a friend or family member your boating plan and your expected return time. There are fewer boaters in the fall to help in the case of an accident or emergency.

Always Wear Life Jackets

Wearing your life jacket, while always a smart move, is even more important in the fall. If you should accidentally fall overboard, the cold water will quickly drain away your strength.

