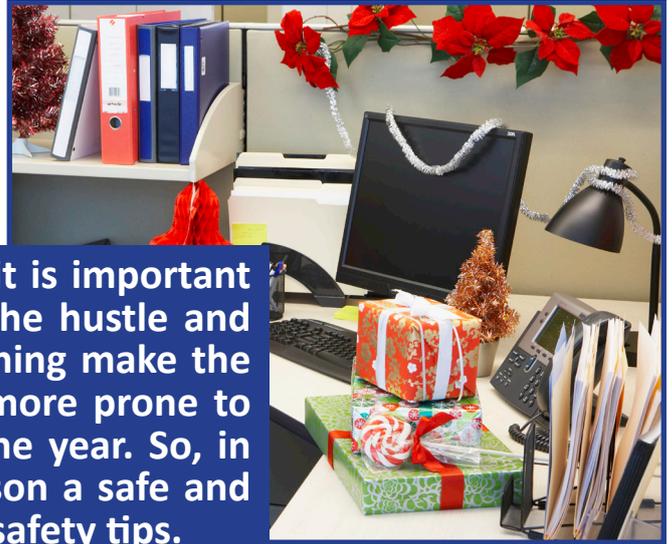


Festive season safety tips



With the festive season drawing nearer, it is important for us to be more careful and vigilant. The hustle and bustle of parties, shopping, and entertaining make the festive season a time when people are more prone to have accidents than any other time of the year. So, in order to help you make this holiday season a safe and happy one, here are some festive season safety tips.

Shopping during the festive season

The festive season means one thing for shoppers – mayhem! With the shops getting busier toward the end of November and early December, you'll want to remember some tips to keep you safe during this frantic time.

- Don't get loaded down with too many bags. Try to keep one hand free.
- Try and avoid taking young children into busy shopping areas but if it is unavoidable, make sure they know what to do if they lose you.
- Agree on a meeting point with older children in case you get separated. Keep alert and aware of your surroundings, especially in busy shops and crowded streets where thieves and pickpockets may well be operating.
- Keep a close watch on your valuables and try not to keep them all in one place.

End-of-year parties

Anyone that has experienced their fair share of year-end functions knows that they can quickly get out of hand. If you enjoy an alcoholic drink or two to celebrate the year's successes, be aware that being inebriated can affect your awareness and threaten your safety.

- Watch your drinks and food to ensure that nothing is added to them.
- Never leave your drink unattended, even

if you are going onto a dance floor or to the bathroom.

- If you meet someone new at a party don't go home with them. Don't invite them back to your home or accept a lift from them. Arrange a second date in a public place to get to know the person better.
- Pay attention to your instincts. If you feel uneasy about someone, there may be a reason – don't give them personal details about yourself and don't arrange a second date.

At-home festivities

It seems that only very few of us can avoid many hours in the kitchen at this time of year. Feeling frustrated and under pressure to whip up spectacular meals for family and friends can provide opportunity for disaster to strike.

- When cooking, make sure you set audible and reliable timers for everything so that you don't burn your meal or set fire to the house. Wear heat-proof gloves and take care when chopping vegetables.
- Cold weather can be fun when you're next to a cosy fire – set strict rules for lighting and maintaining a fire. Nominate one or two people that are allowed within a specific zone that is closest to the fire as they are in charge of keeping the fire going.
- Make sure your first aid kit is well-stocked before the festivities begin.