

Wisconsin Safety Council: Tips to stay safe during the holidays & winter months

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MADISON – Wisconsin Safety Council – the state’s leading provider of safety training and products – reminds all Wisconsinites to take extra precautions this holiday season and throughout the winter months. Midwest winters can lead to a variety of dangerous situations, so it is important to be prepared. Over the holidays and during the winter months, the Safety Council urges everyone to follow these easy tips to stay safe while still enjoying the season.

Staying Safe on the Ice

First responders in Southern Wisconsin have responded to numerous instances of people falling through ice in the past week. While winter recreational activities like ice fishing, skating and hockey are common pastimes around the holidays, it is important to check the ice before going on it.

- Ice thickness should be checked every 150 feet to ensure it can support necessary weight wherever you plan to go
- Clear ice should be at least four to six inches for ice fishing or other activities on foot
- If driving on clear ice, it should be at least eight to 15 inches thick depending on the weight of the vehicle
- Vehicles and other heavy items parked on ice should be spread out to ensure proper weight distribution

Staying Safe on the Road

More people will be traveling around the holidays, which means there is more risk on the roads. Wisconsinites should take the proper precautions to protect themselves and others throughout the winter season.

- Keep your gas tank filled and ensure your vehicle has fresh antifreeze
- Ensure your spare tire is inflated and your vehicle has a wheel wrench and tripod jack
- Travel with a shovel in your vehicle
- Have an emergency kit in your vehicle that includes: jumper cables, a tool kit, flashlight with extra batteries, reflective triangle, first aid kit, nonperishable foods, matches in a waterproof container, blankets, mittens, socks and hats
- Ensure all ice is scraped off your vehicle’s windows before traveling
- Keep your windshield washer fluid filled
- Avoid using cruise control in wintry conditions
- Increase following distance to eight to 10 seconds to prevent crashes
- If conditions are too poor to drive, pull off the road to a safe place and wait for conditions to improve

Staying Safe During COVID-19

While staying home and celebrating the holidays with just those in your household is the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, many families will still get together in the coming weeks. If spending time together in person, it is important to remember these safety tips to keep loved ones safe and healthy over the holidays.

- Limit the amount of attendees at gatherings
- Maintain a distance of at least six feet between individuals
- Wear a face covering, especially when unable to physically distance
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer
- Limit contact with frequently touched surfaces

For more information about how to stay safe this winter and during the holidays, click the links below:

[National Safety Council – Winter Safety Tips](#)

[CDC – Holiday Celebrations and Small Gatherings](#)