



NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SAFETY OFFICE

# RISK MANAGEMENT MONTHLY

DEC  
2025

## Winter Safety Campaign 2025



- Merry Christmas! Be safe and take the time to reflect and spend quality time with family and loved ones! Enjoy the winter weather - safety first!
- Remember that safety awareness applies 24/7, both on and off duty! Always have a plan! Make responsible decisions for you and your family!
- Get your FREE flu shot and stay healthy during the holidays!
- <https://safety.army.mil/MEDIA/Seasonal-Safety-Campaigns/Winter-Safety-2025>



### Holiday Season 2025

While the winter holiday season is filled with traditions, celebrations, and time spent with family and friends, it is also a very dangerous time of year for Soldiers off duty and presents unique risks that demand our attention. Historically, the Army loses about 10 Soldiers between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Too often, these tragedies stem from private motor vehicle accidents, with speeding, failure to wear seat belts, and alcohol use as leading factors.

This year, we can change that story. As the holiday season draws near, remember that safety is a mission we all share. As stated by the Secretary of the Army in a recently released message, *Just Pick Up During the Holidays*, "we're all in this together." Leaders, stay engaged with your Soldiers, understand their holiday plans, and reinforce the importance of making sound decisions — especially on the road. Soldiers, remain vigilant in every off-duty activity and continue to look out for your battle buddies. Whether at home or on the road, risk management must remain a priority.

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center has produced a variety of tools to help manage risk, including the 2025 Off-Duty Safety Awareness Presentation and Safety Shorts, both of which are ready made safety briefs that are perfect for preparing Soldiers for the hazards they could encounter during the holidays. Those products - as well as numerous other risk management tools, such as counseling checklists, small-unit leader cards, and downloadable safety briefings - can be found on the USACRC website at <https://safety.army.mil>.

Reducing off-duty mishaps will always be a challenge, but with your engaged leadership and the disciplined use of risk management tools, I believe in our ability to rise to it. Every safe choice strengthens our formations, protects our battle buddies, and ensures we all return ready for the missions ahead. Together, we will succeed.

You have given your all throughout 2025, and now it's time to take well-earned rest. Enjoy this season with family and friends, and know that your dedication has made a lasting impact on our Army. Thank you for your service, your commitment, and for being part of this great team. We look forward to standing strong together again in 2026. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful, safe, and memorable holiday season.

BE ALL YOU CAN BE - Readiness Through Safety!

Jean Pierre Alcedo  
Command Sergeant Major

Jonathan C. Byrom  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

## Holiday Tree Safety Tips

Ensure a merry and bright holiday season by safely maintaining your tree with the following tips.

**Keep away from heat:**  
Make sure your tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like an air duct, fireplace or space heater.

**Examine cords:**  
Examine extension cords and lights for signs of damage. Frayed electric cords should be discarded.

**Inspect lights:**  
Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Cracked or damaged sockets and/or loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.

**Trim the stump:**  
Trim the tree's stump by at least two inches on freshly cut trees. Allow it to absorb water for 24 hours before bringing it inside.

**Keep it watered:**  
Fill the water reservoir daily and check the condition of the trunk bark and branches for moisture. Shedding or dry needles could mean the tree is drying out, increasing overall fire risks.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

### Don't Climb Alone

Never climb a ladder to string lights or hang ornaments without someone to watch or help.

### Be Firm

Set up the ladder so that it's on a firm, secure and level foundation.

### Take Your Time

Never rush while hanging holiday lights and decorations.

### Be Afraid of Heights

Don't stand above the three rungs from the top of a step-ladder.

### Practice the 3-Point Rule

Always have three points of contact while on the ladder (two hands, one foot or two feet, one hand).

## Safety Tools & Resources



The New York Army  
National Guard Safety  
Webpage



The Army National Guard  
Safety Website



Is your command compliant?  
Initiate a Command Safety  
Assessment



The United States Army  
Combat Readiness Center  
Website



The future of Safety  
Reporting and Statistics  
for the Army



Create & Manage your  
deliberate risk management  
worksheets online

Proponent for this Monthly Newsletter is the NYARNG Safety Team

New York Army National Guard, ATTN: MNAV-OS, 330 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York 12110-3514



# The 12 DAYS of SAFETY

- Never use lighted candles near trees or boughs
- Keep poisonous plants out of reach of children and pets
- Keep trees away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources
- Make sure your tree has a stable platform
- Choose an artificial tree that is labeled fire resistant
- If using a natural tree, make sure it is well watered
- Check holiday lights for fraying, bare spots, gaps in the insulation or excessive kinking in the wire
- Turn off all tree lights and decorations when not in use
- When putting up decorations, use a step stool or ladder to reach high places
- Designate a sober driver
- When preparing a meal, wash hands, utensils, sink and anything else that touches raw meat
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165°F

*Happy Holidays*

nscc.org

## WINTER SAFETY

WINTER READY, MISSION STEADY!

### WINTER DRIVING PREP

Prepare Your Car to Give Winter Mishaps the Cold Shoulder

- Test your battery.
- Check the engine cooling system.
- Have winter tires with a deeper, more flexible tread put on your car.
- If using all-season tires, check the tread and replace if less than 2/32 of an inch.
- Check the tire pressure - tire pressure drops as the temperature drops.
- Check your wiper blades.
- Add wiper fluid rated for -30 degrees.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid the gas line freezing up.

**KEEP YOUR CAR'S EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT FULLY STOCKED, TOO!**

U.S. ARMY <https://safety.army.mil>

CHECK OUT THE USARNG ON SOCIAL MEDIA

# IN THE RIGHT light

## DECORATE YOUR HOME SAFELY DURING THE HOLIDAYS.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, **860 home fires** caused by holiday decorations occur **each year**. An additional **210 home fires** are caused by Christmas trees per year. Follow these steps to ensure you decorate your home safely during the winter holidays.

- Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations are marked for proper use**
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations** should be plugged into circuits protected by **ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs)**
- Inspect** all lights, decorations, and extension cords **for damage before using**
- Exercise caution** when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your equipment at least **10 feet** from power lines
- Turn off** all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations **before leaving home or going to sleep**
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets** with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can **overheat and cause a fire**
- Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights together**
- Water your Christmas tree daily**
- Purchase electrical decorations from reputable retailers** and that are approved by a national recognized testing lab such as **UL** (Underwriters Laboratories), **Intertek (ETL)**, or **Canadian Standards Association (CSA)**
- Keep all decorations at least 3 feet away from heating equipment or an open flame**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ELECTRICAL FIRE PREVENTION VISIT [WWW.ESFI.ORG](http://WWW.ESFI.ORG)

PLEASE SHARE THIS FREE RESOURCE TO SAVE LIVES

[www.facebook.com/ESFI.org](http://www.facebook.com/ESFI.org) [www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg](http://www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg) [www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg](http://www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg)

### Did you know?

A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes **1 in every 4** winter fires.

### As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.

Make sure your tree is **at least 3 feet away** from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.

U.S. Fire Administration **NFPA**

## State Safety Points of Contact

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