



DON'T CREATE FUEL FOR A FIRE THIS CHRISTMAS

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As we approach Christmas, it is important to keep these simple tips in mind. The last thing you want to deal with is a fire during the holidays. Fires can be prevented and few easy steps could save your life!

Trees:

- When buying a live tree, check for freshness - green needles, trunk sticky with resin, and few lost needles when tapped on the ground.
- Never place a fresh Christmas tree next to a heat source. Heat dries out trees and makes them easier to catch on fire.
- Keep your tree stand filled with water at all times.
- When the tree gets dry, get rid of it. Look for a recycling center near you.
- Never burn a Christmas tree or its branches in a fireplace or wood stove.
- When buying an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant" or "Flame Retardant."



Lights, candles, and other decorations:

- Use only Underwriters Laboratories- or Intertek- (ETL) listed holiday lights.
- Check lights each year. Replace those with frayed or heavily kinked wires, gaps in insulation, or cracked sockets.
- When decorating outside, use only lights labeled for outdoor use.
- Do not link more than three strings of lights.
- Turn off holiday lights when you leave your home or go to bed.
- Use sturdy candle holders and place them where they're unlikely to be knocked over.
- Blow out candles before you leave your home or go to bed.
- Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace.

Holiday Entertaining:

- When cooking for guests, stay in the kitchen and keep an eye on the stove.
- If you or your guests smoke, do it outside.
- Provide deep ashtrays for smokers. Before dumping ashes in the trash, soak them in water.
- After a party, check for ashes and butts on the floor and seat cushions where people were smoking.

Holiday Fire Facts:

- Fire deaths are highest in the winter months.
- During the holiday season each year, fires injure about 2,600 people.
- Christmas trees are associated with 210 fires each year, resulting in 24 deaths, 27 injuries, and about \$13 million in property losses.
- Holiday and other decorative lights cause about 240 fires each year. One fifth of these fires start in Christmas trees.
- Christmas Day is the peak day of the year for home candle fires.

Source(s): http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/home_fire_prev/holiday-seasonal/holiday.shtm
<http://www.myoptumhealth.com/portal/Information/item/Fireproof+Your+Holidays?archiveChannel=Home%2FArticle&clicked=true>

Merry Christmas
from ACOOP!



Winter Storms Are Coming...

Before a Storm

PREPARE YOUR HOME:

- Listen to weather forecasts.
- Check your emergency supplies.
- Have your chimney or flue inspected each year.
- Install a smoke detector and a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector. Test the batteries each month, and replace them twice a year.
- Weatherproof your home.
- Bring your pets indoors during the winter.

PREPARE YOUR CAR:

- Keep your car fueled and in good working order. Be sure to check the following:
- Antifreeze
- Windshield wiper fluid (wintertime mixture)
- Heater
- Brakes
- Ignition
- Emergency flashers
- Exhaust
- Tires (air pressure and wear)
- Fuel
- Oil
- Brake fluid
- Defroster
- Battery
- Radiator

STOCK UP ON EMERGENCY SUPPLIES:

- Make sure you have at least one of the following in case there is a power failure:
 - Battery-powered radio (for listening to local emergency instructions). Have extra batteries.
 - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio receiver (for listening to National Weather Service broadcasts). See www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr for more information.
- Find out how your community warns the public about severe weather:
 - Siren
 - Radio
 - TV
- Listen to emergency broadcasts.
- Know what winter storm warning terms mean:
 - Winter weather advisory: expect winter weather conditions to cause inconvenience and hazards.
 - Frost/freeze warning: expect below-freezing temperatures.
 - Winter storm watch: be alert; a storm is likely.
 - Winter storm warning: take action; the storm is in or entering the area.
 - Blizzard warning: seek refuge immediately! Snow and strong winds, near-zero visibility, deep snow drifts, and life-threatening wind chill.

Are You Prepared?

During a Storm

BE SAFE INDOORS:

- Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space.
- Never use a charcoal or gas grill indoors—the fumes are deadly.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Keep as much heat as possible inside your home.
- Check the temperature in your home often during severely cold weather.
- Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Eat well-balanced meals to help you stay warmer.

BE SAFE OUTDOORS:

- Dress warmly and stay dry.
- Wear a hat, scarf, and mittens.
- Avoid frostbite.
- If you have to do heavy outdoor chores, dress warmly and work slowly.
- Avoid walking on ice or getting wet.
- Notify friends and family where you will be before you go hiking, camping, or skiing.
- Avoid traveling on ice-covered roads, overpasses, and bridges if at all possible.
- If you are stranded, it is safest to stay in your car.

After a Storm

RETURNING HOME:

- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by placing generators, pressure washers, charcoal grills, camp stoves, or other fuel-burning devices outside and away from open doors, windows, and air vents.
- Clean your home as recommended to stop mold. Never mix bleach and ammonia, because the fumes could kill you.
- Eat and drink only food and water you know are safe.
- Drive safely, wear your seatbelt, and don't drink and drive.

Source: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/beforestorm/supplylists.asp>

Slip Sliding Away: Driving on Icy Roads

Driving in icy conditions poses a potential life threatening situation. It is necessary to understand these risks and minimize the amount of time you spend on the road. With the holidays fast approaching, interstate travel will be picking up and the roads will soon be full of families making their way across the state. By following these simple precautionary measures, your chances of having an accident will significantly reduce.

Driving safely on icy roads

1. Decrease your speed and leave plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
2. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
3. Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
4. Keep your lights and windshield clean.
5. Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
6. Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
7. Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
8. Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
9. Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

If your rear wheels skid...

1. Take your foot off the accelerator.
2. Steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.
3. If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.
4. If you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
5. If you have anti-lock brakes (ABS), do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. You will feel the brakes pulse — this is normal.

If your front wheels skid...

1. Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but don't try to steer immediately.
2. As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

If you get stuck...

1. Do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper.
2. Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way.
3. Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.
4. Use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car.
5. Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel or salt in the path of the wheels, to help get traction.
6. Try rocking the vehicle. (Check your owner's manual first — it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.



PROPANE Safety First



With winter weather already setting in across the northeastern corner of the state, taking the time to ensure your home and family are prepared for any type of winter weather emergency will mitigate many of the hazards and challenges that come with an Arkansas winter storm.

Before bad winter weather has a chance to shut everything down and make basic tasks exponentially harder, there are a few steps that can be done to ensure that even the worst winter storm can be handled with ease.

- Ensuring that your propane tanks are located in a safe and secure area outside of the house.
- Make sure there is an adequate amount of propane in the tank.
- Know what leaking propane smells like (rotten eggs) and educate your family about the risks involved and can recognize the smell.

When a winter storm does occur and the use of propane tanks is needed, there are a few safety tips that should be followed:

- Check your tanks for any broken, bent, or damaged gas lines.
- Do not use any type of equipment fueled by gasoline, propane, or other fuel indoors as they may produce hazardous carbon monoxide.
- If you smell gas, evacuate the area and immediately call your propane supplier and/or emergency responders.
- Never leave a propane heater unattended and keep all flammable materials away from the heater.
- Never tamper with safety devices, regulators, or storage tank fittings.
- Never use an open flame to test for propane leaks.

Prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning is listed in the following steps:

- Never use range burners as space heaters.
- Never use propane heaters that are not intended for indoor use.
- Never use a barbecue grill indoors.
- Have all propane appliances tested regularly by a qualified technician. Always make sure there is plenty of ventilation.

Information obtained from the Florida Propane Gas Safety, Education and Research Council

http://www.propanefl.com/safety_tips.htm

http://www.propanefl.com/brochures/brochure_hurricane_safety.pdf

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

www.dis.arkansas.gov/security/Pages/ContinuityofOperationsProgram.aspx

Arkansas Continuity of Operations Program Training Schedule

COOP Continuity Concepts

This training will discuss the methodology and state standards for Continuity of Operations and Disaster Recovery planning in Arkansas. The course will also train new users on the software tool that is used to create continuity plans. All classes: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

DIS Training Room

January 5, 26

February 16, 23

March 8, 22

Arkansas State Library, Bessie Moore Room

January 18

February 15

March 13

Additional courses are offered throughout the state. Please check the ACOOP training calendar on the DIS website at <http://www.dis.arkansas.gov/newsroom/Pages/events.aspx>

Test Training & Exercise

Testing your plans is important to the safety of your agency. Learn how to create effective exercises that will help get everyone involved.

DIS Training Room

January 12 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

To register for this training please call 1-855-620-2812 or email sammy.hugen@arkansas.gov or kourtney.mcbride@arkansas.gov.

Get It Done, COOP Planning Workday

Please make sure your employees are uploaded to your plan prior to the class. Bring any portion of your plan and we will step through adding data to the system. To obtain an upload template, please contact the ACOOP team.

DIS Training Room

February 9 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

To register for this training please call 1-855-620-2812 or email sammy.hugen@arkansas.gov or kourtney.mcbride@arkansas.gov.

Quarterly Planners Meeting

January 20

4th Floor Conference Room

MAC building

1-2:30 p.m.

COOP Workshop

Need an afternoon to work on your COOP plan with some guidance? Workshops are held after every class session, from 1-4 p.m., in the DIS training room. To register or ask about the location of these classes contact the **ACOOP team at 1-855-620-2812.**

Unless noted otherwise, all training sessions are held in the MAC Building, #1 Capitol Mall, DIS 3rd floor training room. We are available by appointment to help you with your plans individually and we can customize training to fit the needs of your agency or district.

Cancellations: Due to the demand of courses please notify the ACOOP team 24 hours prior to the class if you are unable to attend for any reason.