



**Purpose**

The Army Emergency Management (EM) program is responsible for all activities and operations related to preparing for, mitigating the potential effect of, preventing, responding to, and recovering from all multi-agency and/or multi-jurisdictional emergencies on or impacting Army installations worldwide. The Army EM Program functions within an all-hazards environment consisting of all natural, technological (man-made), and terrorism hazards.

**Vision**

The vision of the Army EM Program is to provide Army EM services when and where they are needed, with the joint and interagency capacity necessary to effectively and efficiently protect the Army community and mission capability from all hazards.

**Mission**

The mission of the EM Program is to provide integrated and comprehensive Army EM services necessary to protect our community and mission capabilities from all hazards in a cost-effective, implementable, and sustainable manner.

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Joint Operation Center
- GOHSEP 225-925-7500
- American Red Cross  
1-800-RED-CROSS
- Federal Emergency Management Agency 1-800-621-FEMA
- National Poison Control Center  
1-800-222-1222
- National Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-799-7233

**EMERGENCY MANAGER**

This month's bulletin will focus on two separate topics. The first is Holiday Home Safety Tips and the second is How to Build a Winter Vehicle Emergency Kit.

The holiday season is supposed to be a time for relaxing and celebrating with friends and family. Sorry to be a Grinch, but the most wonderful time of the year can also prove hazardous to your health and safety. The seemingly endless string of parties, the introduction of new foods and cooking techniques to your home, and even shopping for gifts can all put your wellbeing at risk. To ensure you make it to January 1 unscathed, follow the guide in this issue of the Emergency Management Bulletin to the biggest holiday health hazards and how to avoid them.



With the holidays upon us, I encourage everyone to prepare a Winter Vehicle Emergency Kit. Most of us will be traveling during the holidays and the weather can turn on a dime. Please use the guide in this month's bulletin to prepare your kit so you will be ready to go to grandma's house safe and secure. Always Remember "Be Prepared".

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## Holiday Home Safety Tips

The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, home decorating, entertaining, and an increased risk of fire and accidents. The International Association of Certified Home Inspectors recommends that you follow these guidelines to help make your holiday season safer and more enjoyable.

### Holiday Lighting

- Use caution with holiday decorations and, whenever possible, choose those made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant and non-combustible materials.
- Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials, and do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees.
- Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings, and replace damaged items before plugging lights in. If you have any questions about electrical safety, ask an InterNACHI inspector during your next scheduled inspection. Do not overload extension cords.
- Don't mount lights in any way that can damage the cord's wire insulation. To hold lights in place, string them through hooks or insulated staples--don't use nails or tacks. Never pull or tug lights to remove them.
- Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground-fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire



### Decorations

- Use only non-combustible and flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel and artificial icicles of plastic and non-leaded metals.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp and breakable, and keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children.
- Avoid trimmings that resemble candy and food that may tempt a young child to put them in his mouth.





Happy  
Holidays



## Holiday Home Safety Tips Continued

### Holiday Entertaining

- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking for holiday visitors, remember to keep an eye on the range.
- Provide plenty of large, deep ashtrays, and check them frequently. Cigarette butts can smolder in the trash and cause a fire, so completely douse cigarette butts with water before discarding.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, out of sight and reach of children (preferably in a locked cabinet).
- Test your smoke alarms, and let guests know what your fire escape plan is.



### Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "fire-resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness.

A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break.

- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators and portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.
- Be sure to keep the stand filled with water, because heated rooms can dry live trees out rapidly.
- Make sure the base is steady so the tree won't tip over easily.



### Fireplaces

- Before lighting any fire, remove all greens, boughs, papers and other decorations from fireplace area. Check to see that the flue is open.
- Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten.
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.



Happy  
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## Holiday Home Safety Tips Continued

### Toys and Ornaments



- Purchase appropriate toys for the appropriate age. Some toys designed for older children might be dangerous for younger children.
- Electric toys should be UL/FM approved.
- Toys with sharp points, sharp edges, strings, cords, and parts small enough to be swallowed should not be given to small children.
- Place older ornaments and decorations that might be painted with lead paint out of the reach of small children and pets

### Children and Pets

- Poinsettias are known to be poisonous to humans and animals, so keep them well out of reach, or avoid having them.
- Keep decorations at least 6 inches above the child's reach.
- Avoid using tinsel. It can fall on the floor and a curious child or pet may eat it. This can cause anything from mild distress to death.
- Keep any ribbons on gifts and tree ornaments shorter than 7 inches. A child could wrap a longer strand of ribbon around their neck and choke.
- Avoid mittens with strings for children. The string can get tangled around the child's neck and cause them to choke. It is easier to replace a mitten than a child.
- Watch children and pets around space heaters or the fireplace. Do not leave a child or pet unattended.
- Store scissors and any sharp objects that you use to wrap presents out of your child's reach.
- Inspect wrapped gifts for small decorations, such as candy canes, gingerbread men, and mistletoe berries, all of which are choking hazards.



### Security

- Use your home burglar alarm system.
- If you plan to travel for the holidays, don't discuss your plans with strangers.
- Have a trusted friend or neighbor to keep an eye on your home.







Happy  
Holidays



## Building a Winter Emergency Kit for Your Car

We've all seen the TV news shots, usually taken from a helicopter, of a miles-long line of forlorn cars and trucks stuck on a snow-clogged highway where they've been sitting for hours and likely will be sitting for hours more. If you're in that mess, just about the only thing you can do is wait.

But what if you had been driving on a less well-traveled road on your way to visit friends who live in the back of beyond. A sudden, massive snowfall begins, visibility drops to just a few feet, and, because you are not completely familiar with the road, you drift off the pavement and slide into the ditch. Now what? You haven't seen another car for an hour and even though you have a cell phone, you're not getting any bars.



It's pretty unlikely that you will be able to get yourself out of the ditch without help. You may have to wait a long time for help to arrive — even if your cell phone does work and you can reach the people you were on your way to see who ask you where you are so they can send a tow truck. Besides, do you really know where you are?

The best advice: be prepared. It is easy and relatively inexpensive to put together an emergency travel kit that includes enough stuff to keep you warm and, in the best case, get you out of the mess you find yourself in.

Some of the items in our suggested kit could be kept in your vehicle year-round and others are specifically intended for winter driving. (These items are **NOT** in order of precedence)

**1. Cell Phone Charger.** Cold weather drains any battery much more quickly than more moderate temperatures. There are even hand-crank models available for those times when your car's battery is dead.



**2. Ice Scraper and Snow Brush.** Obvious, no?

**3. Blankets.** If the car is not running, there will be no heat. Those inexpensive, heat-reflecting "Space Blankets" are helpful, but a heavy wool blanket or sleeping bag for every occupant is better.



*Happy  
Holidays*



## Building a Winter Emergency Kit for Your Car (Continued)

**4. Folding Shovel.** You might be able to dig yourself out of the ditch. It's worth a try and at least the work will keep you warm.



**5. Extra Clothing.** A rule of thumb: enough extra clothing for each person to keep them warm for at least an hour outside the car.

**6. Flashlight.** A good flashlight with good batteries (and perhaps some spares). A headlamp leaves your hands free to shovel or change a tire, so that might be a better option. There are even hand-crank flashlight/radio combinations available. Don't rely on the kind that plug into the vehicle's 12-volt outlet — if the car battery is dead, so is the flashlight.



**7. Sand.** To add some traction at the drive wheels after you've dug them out with the shovel.

**8. First Aid Kit.** Basic stuff like bandages, antiseptic cream, pain relievers, and antacids. Also any routine medication for anyone in the car.

**9. Tow Strap or Chain.** Just in case someone should drive by in a big 4x4 and offer to pull you out of the fix you're in, but he doesn't have a tow strap. Also make sure you know where to attach the strap so you don't pull the bumper off your car.



**10. Food and Water.** No need for a picnic lunch here, but some bottles of water (1 gallon per person recommended) and some dried food or energy bars could keep everyone in a little better mood.

Among the other things you should keep in the car at all times are jumper cables; a good spare tire and all the parts to your jack; a tool kit in case someone who knows how to fix a car stops and offers to help; flares or other signaling devices; and a collapsible fuel container for those awkward times that you have walked to a gas station only to find out they don't have a gas can for you to borrow.