



Safety & Environmental Newsletter

December 2015 Issue – 58th Edition

Enjoy a Safe Holiday Season!

Holiday safety is an issue that burns brightest from late November to mid-January, the time when families gather, parties are scheduled and travel spikes. By taking some basic precautions, you can ensure your whole family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season.

Fire Starters

Holidays and candles go together like children and toys.

Twelve percent of home candle fires occur in December, according to a report issued in 2013 by the National Fire Protection Association. Increased use of candles combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations present in many homes means more risk for fire. The top three days for home-candle fires were Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

About 2,200 deaths were caused by fires, burns and other fire-related injuries in 2013, according to *Injury Facts 2015*, a statistical report on unintentional injuries and death produced by the National Safety Council.

To prevent fire in your home:

- Never leave burning candles unattended; blow them out when you leave a room
- Keep candles out of reach of children
- Never sleep in a room with a lit candle and extinguish all candles before going to sleep
- Make sure candles are on stable surfaces, where they can't easily be knocked over
- Don't burn candles near trees, curtains or any other flammable items
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace

The Chimney Safety Institute of America recommends checking and cleaning the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year.

It's Better to Give ... Safely

We've all heard it's important when choosing toys for infants or small children to avoid small parts that can be pulled or broken off and might prove to be a choking hazard. Here are some additional gift-related safety tips you might not have heard about:

- Select gifts for older adults that are not heavy or awkward to handle
- Be aware of [dangers associated with coin lithium batteries](#); of particular concern is the ingestion of button batteries
- For answers to more of your [holiday toy safety questions](#), check out this Consumer Product Safety Commission blog
- See which [toys have been recalled](#)



Decorations

Putting up decorations is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, however an estimated 15,000 injuries involving holiday decorating were seen in emergency rooms during the 2012 season.

- "Angel hair" is made from spun glass, and it can irritate your eyes and skin; always wear gloves when handling it, or substitute non-flammable cotton



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- When spraying artificial snow on windows or other surfaces, be sure to follow directions carefully; these sprays can irritate your lungs if inhaled
- Decorate the tree with your kids in mind; move ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks toward the top
- Always use the proper step ladder; don't stand on chairs or other furniture
- Lights are among the best parts of holiday decorating; make sure there are no exposed or frayed wires, loose connections or broken sockets
- Plants can spruce up your holiday decorating, but keep those that may be poisonous (including some Poinsettias) out of reach of children or pets; the national [Poison Control Center](#) can be reached at (800) 222-1222
- Make sure paths are clear indoors so older adults do not trip on wrapping paper, decorations, toys, etc.; NSC provides tips for older adults on [slip, trip and fall protections](#)

Holiday Travel

Many people choose to travel during the holidays by automobile, with the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation. In 2013, 343 people died on New Year's Day, 360 on Thanksgiving Day and 88 on Christmas Day, according to *Injury Facts 2015*. Alcohol-impaired fatalities represented 31% of the totals.

- Use a designated driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol, over-the-counter or illegal drugs all cause impairment
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up no matter how long or short the distance being traveled
- Put that cell phone away; distracted driving causes one-quarter of all crashes
- Make sure the vehicle is properly maintained, and keep an emergency kit with you
- Be prepared for heavy traffic, and possibly heavy snow

Remember, when guests are staying in your home, make sure areas have night lights or easy-to-reach lamps in case they need to get up during the night. And, whether you are visiting someone else's home or you have guests in your home, make sure all medications are kept up and away and out of sight from young children.





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Green Purchasing... Sustainable Acquisition... BioPreferred... Affirmative Procurement... What does it all mean?

As the single largest purchaser in the United States, the Federal government and its contractors have the opportunity to make huge impacts with their purchases. One impact is to help to create markets for other industries to produce “green” goods and services that are healthier for people and our environment. **Sustainable Acquisition** or **Green Purchasing** is the purchasing of products which are **energy-efficient, water-efficient, biobased, environmentally preferable, non-ozone depleting**, and those made with **recycled or recovered materials**. **Green Purchasing** is mandated by Executive Orders, Federal Statutes, NASA Regulations, and GSFC purchasing requirements. Website links for each of these programs can be found on the Code 250 Green Purchasing Program website at: http://sites.wff.nasa.gov/code250/green_purchasing.html

The **BioPreferred** program is managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to increase the use of **biobased** products. Biobased products are made from renewable domestic agricultural materials (including plant, animal, and marine materials) or forestry materials. Examples include soy degreasers, soy hydraulic oil, and bio-diesel fuel.

The Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG) or **Affirmative Procurement** is part of EPA’s continuing effort to promote the use of materials recovered from solid waste. Designated products are required to be purchased with recovered or recycled content. Examples include paper, sanitary tissue, and carpet cushion.

To comply with **Green Purchasing** requirements, follow these steps:

1. Determine if your product or service has **green** requirements. In addition to the website associated with each purchasing program, the green procurement tool (<http://www.sftool.gov/greenprocurement>) associates all the requirements for each item or service in one location.
2. Request items or services:
 - through NASA Procurement, complete Section 2 of Form NF 1707
 - through contractor procurement process, follow local procedures
3. If the product or service has **green** requirements associated with the purchase request but cannot be purchased this way, a waiver must be completed by the request originator. Use form GSFC 23-68.
 - List the item.
 - Check the reason it cannot be procured as required.
 - Include a full justification to support the reason checked. The justification should include conflicting technical requirements, prices of lower priced items, or other supporting documentation.
 - Return the form to Code 250 for signature.
4. Keep purchase records of all items which have **green** purchasing requirements.
5. Report to Code 250 on purchases of all items (not purchased through Federal Supply Sources) which have **green** purchasing requirements, during the annual December data call.

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