



SAFETY INSIGHTS

News and Awareness Information from Environmental Health & Safety



“Make it HO HO HO...., not OH NO NO!”

Please take a moment to consider these important holiday safety messages and tips to ensure your safety throughout the holidays.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

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Safety, Training and Environmental Compliance Manager

Holiday Heartburn

Keep your holidays happy by handling food safely. The foodsafety.gov website from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides some valuable holiday food safety tips:

- Wash your hands frequently when handling food.
- Keep raw meat away from fresh produce.
- Use separate cutting boards, plate and utensils for uncooked and cooked meats to avoid cross-contamination.
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature.
- Refrigerate hot or cold leftover food within two hours of being served.
- When storing turkey, cut the leftovers in small pieces so they will chill quickly.
- Thanksgiving leftovers are safe for three to four days when properly refrigerated.
- **Safety Note: if you are hosting a food event on campus, you may need a permit. Food must be obtained from the campus caterer or from a food establishment that is permitted by Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDOHS). More >>> [Food Safety Policy](#)**



Tips for Safe Snow Shoveling

The design of shovels and spades did not come from an ergonomist's drawing board. They are basic tools that have evolved over many centuries. Thousands of years of experience with such common tools has resulted in great variety of shovels and spades being developed to meet numerous needs.

Some basic reminders when shoveling snow this winter:

- Bend your knees and lift with your legs.
- As you lift the snow, keep the shovel blade close to you, to reduce back strain.
- Switch off between snow shoveling right-handed and left-handed, so that you're working different muscles.
- Periodically change your grip on the hand holding the bar (palm under vs. palm over).
- When the snowfall is heavy (1 foot in depth, let's say), don't try to clean right down to the ground with a single scoop. Instead, skim the top 6 inches off, then scoop up the bottom 6 inches. Otherwise, you could be hurting yourself by lifting too much.
- Take frequent breaks and don't forget to stretch before and after shoveling.
- **Safety Note - Slow down and be careful when walking and driving on and off campus. Roads and pathways can look clear, but may be icy.**



Decorations... Are they Naughty or Nice?

Increased use of candles and fireplaces, combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations present in many homes and offices means more risk for fire.



Here are some safe decorating tips:

- If using a natural tree, make sure it is fresh and well-watered.
- Never use lighted candles near trees or boughs.
- Keep trees away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources.
- Do not obstruct pathways to exit doors.
- Make sure your tree has a stable platform.
- Choose an artificial tree that is labeled fire resistant.
- Only use holiday lights that have the Underwriters Lab (UL) label.
- Prior to installation, lights should be inspected for worn, frayed or damaged parts.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- **Safety Note: Natural trees, decorations, and candles are not permitted on campus. For more information please contact the Campus Fire Marshals at 2-9678.**

More on decorating safely.

More >> <https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/winter/holiday>

December 2019 Safety Spotlight



Heliana Mejia-Scherl, Compliance Coordinator in HRS Time and Attendance is our December 2019 Safety Spotlight Award winner. Heliana is being recognized for her continuous work with Environmental Health and Safety. Heliana has played a major role in training supervisors in accident prevention and the procedures that need to be followed in the event of a workplace accident. She is a tireless advocate for workplace safety, and an invaluable resource to employees and supervisors alike.

Heliana Mejia-Scherl has a Masters in Organizational Psychology from CUNY Brooklyn College, and is a current PhD candidate in Sociology at Stony Brook University. She has worked in Stony Brook Human Resource Services since July 2004 in a variety of roles. She has over 10 years of experience in management recruitment, hiring, and organizational development, benefits, training, and HR policy implementations. Heliana is responsible for reviewing, processing, and investigating Workers Compensation claims, while collaborating with employees, supervisors, department administrators, and The New York State Insurance Fund to ensure that all state and local laws and regulations are adhered to. Thank you Heliana and keep up the great work!

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