

Security Spotlight



Securitas Security Services, USA, Inc.

December 2017

Number 165

An Informational Guide for Security Clients

A Gift to All

Your actions in personal and professional tolerance and safety will help make an enjoyable holiday season for all. This holiday season practice giving these two gifts—tolerance and safety—to everyone. We encourage our employees, clients and the general public to espouse and promote these behaviors. At Securitas, we believe that this is accomplished through our corporate principles of Integrity, Vigilance, and Helpfulness. It is with this thought that we wish you and your family a joyous and safe holiday season... See you in 2018!!



Staying Safe During the Holidays

With the approach of the holiday season and New Year comes the annual hustle and bustle of the shopping season. At times, the overcrowded malls and stores can elicit uncharitable behaviors in all of us. While running errands this season, it is a good time to make an effort to help others and reinforce the holiday sentiment of good cheer. It is on this spirit, that Securitas would like to focus its last *Spotlight* of 2017.

There are many seemingly insignificant steps we can take to protect ourselves and help ensure the safety of those around us. These actions can be at work, at home and when driving around town. Ultimately, the goal is to enjoy a merry and joyous holiday with friends and family during this festive season. Taking a few precautions will help the achievement of that. We will examine actions that can be taken at home, at work or while in town to enhance safety during the holidays.

Safety at Home

Fire is one of the most frightening events that can be experienced and this danger increases during the holidays. An average of 210 structure fires occur each year from Christmas trees alone (NFPA, 2015). Be aware of the risk from both natural and artificial trees. Check the freshness of a natural tree and the certification of an artificial tree. Placement of the tree in the home, types of lights used on the tree, and use of a timer or remembering to turn off tree lights when going to bed or leaving the house can all reduce the risk of a tree fire. Do not plug multiple extension cords in to one outlet (Chechik, 1989). This can overload the circuit and become a fire risk. Safety at home extends beyond this. The wrapped gifts under the tree can serve as an enticement and make easy targets when viewed through the window. The FBI reports that approximately 400,000 home burglaries occur between the months of November



Integrity / Vigilance
Helpfulness



SpotLight



Securitas Security
Services, USA, Inc.

Safety at Work

Work locations vary, but some common practical guidelines can be employed to ensure the safety of all. First, do not obstruct or obscure fire extinguishers, fire alarms, emergency signs, or exits with holiday decorations. This can create an unnecessary risk for coworkers, clients, and visitors. Holiday office parties are another area for additional attention at the end of the year. These events can pose additional hazards and consideration must be given to everything from food served—to guard against allergic reactions—to the consumption of alcohol. The latter is one of the top concerns for most managers. Ensuring that coworkers either have a designated driver or a cab ride home can help prevent a tragedy. Additionally, drinking responsibly will also protect you and your coworkers from embarrassing situations that could reflect negatively on you and possibly lead to termination. Even though it is a social setting make sure you are following all company rules and policies.



*Integrity / Vigilance
Helpfulness*

and December. Be mindful of what you throw away, empty computer and television boxes are a signal to would-be thieves (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013). Finally, if you will be away from home during the holidays, be careful about what you post to social media. Alerting others that your house is unoccupied can make it a target. A common sense approach will help protect you and your family.

Safety in Town

Many conditions can and do lead to an increase in dangerous driving. During the holiday season the combination of weather, the time of year, and normal driving risk factors result in an increase in accidents (Walter, 2012). A common hazard is distracted driving. It can take the form of cell phone calls, text messages, looking for a parking spot, trying to find a particular store, or watching the GPS. When you take your primary focus off driving, it increases your chances of causing an accident. Wait until you are parked, or ask a passenger to assist with tasks that might be distracting. The stress of the holiday season can also cause dangerous driving. If you are trying to get somewhere to beat the rush, or finish that last minute shopping, it can cause you to speed or take unnecessary risks. Keep in mind that others are experiencing the same pressures. Pay extra attention to your driving and be

aware of the drivers around you. Weather also has a direct correlation to an increase in driving accidents. If where you live experiences severe weather, be sure to allow sufficient time to get to where you are going.

Planning ahead and not rushing could be the best approach to driving in inclement weather. Keeping a safe following distance from the car in front of you can provide much needed reaction time. Following are some additional driving tips. Use the time and pacing three seconds rule. Do this by identifying a fixed point down the road—such as a speed limit sign or overpass. When the car in front of you reaches the chosen point, begin counting. If the car you are driving reaches that same location before you reach the specified number, you are following too close. The three seconds rule is recommended in clear, daytime weather driving. However, for night driving, heavy traffic, or inclement weather you should follow the six seconds rule. This increases the amount of reaction time with the car in front of you. If the weather is extremely poor and you lack a clear line of sight increase the distance to nine seconds. This will provide some of the longest times and distances to react, in the event the car you are following makes a sudden change of speed or direction.

For more information on this and other security related topics, visit the Securitas Safety Awareness Knowledge Center at <http://www.securitasinc.com/en/knowledge-center/security-and-safety-awareness-tips>