Holiday Season Safety

WHAT’S AT STAKE

We want to see you back here at work, safe and sound, after the holiday season. So we are reminding you to be extra careful while you travel, entertain and generally enjoy the holidays.

WHAT’S THE DANGER

A number of factors can increase your chances of injury during the holidays compared to other times of the year. These include winter driving, other forms of travel, a hectic schedule with deadlines to meet, new environments and consumption of alcohol.

EXAMPLE

When you get off work on Friday, you still have to finish shopping and wrapping the gifts you will take on your cross-country drive to spend the holidays with your parents. Tired already, you drive long hours Saturday and Sunday, and start drinking as soon as you arrive at your destination. At 10 p.m. that evening you put your exhausted, slightly drunk self behind the wheel for a quick drive to the airport to pick up your cousin. You have set the stage for a tragedy that will ruin the holidays for your family for years to come.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- A safe holiday starts with planning. Don’t leave things until the last minute. Shop, cook, pack and prepare ahead of time.
- Be prepared for delays. There will be lineups, heavy traffic, overbooked flights and other changes in your plan.
- Carry with you your doctor’s emergency contact numbers and medical information, such as your blood type and health history.

- If you’re taking medicines, pack enough to last several days longer than you expect to be away. Keep them with you in case you are separated from your luggage.
- If traveling by train, identify emergency escape routes from railway cars.
- Get your vehicle serviced for safe driving well before a trip. Winter tires, good windshield wipers and a reliable battery are important. Also keep a road emergency kit on board, with signal flares, a candle and matches for warmth, a blanket, gloves and winter boots.
- Whether staying in a hotel or your sister’s new house, note the escape routes.
- Turn off portable space heaters when you leave your room or go to sleep. Keep heaters three feet (one meter) from anything that can burn.
- Avoid scalding; hot water heaters may be set higher than you’re used to.
- Stay healthy by avoiding people who are coughing and sneezing. Remember to wash your hands frequently.

FINAL WORD

Most important, never drink and drive. If you must drink, do so in a safe environment and in moderation.