

# Hanover County Safety & Risk Focus

## Holiday Safety

When the holiday season is underway, people are feeling festive, including at work. But whether you're decorating your cubicle or taking part in the office potluck, safety should always remain a top priority.

### Safe decorating

- Don't stand on a chair to hang decorations. Use a stepladder, and make sure to read and follow the instructions and warnings on the label.
- Never hang decorations from fire sprinklers – they can prevent the sprinklers from operating properly.
- Inspect all lights, decoration and extension cords for damage before using.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices – they can overheat and cause a fire.
- Never attempt to extend the length of an extension cord by connecting it to another extension cord also known as “daisy chaining”.
- Refrain from placing extension cords in high-traffic areas of your workplace, or under rugs, carpets or furniture.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving.

### Food safety

- Follow safe food-handling guidelines.
- Always wash your hands before and after handling food.
- Serve prepared dishes on clean plates – never on dishes that previously held raw meat.
- If you're preparing a dish ahead of time that contains meat, ensure the meat's internal temperature reaches the proper temperature based on USDA recommendations.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. USDA notes that hot foods should be 140° F or warmer. Use chafing dishes or slow cookers to help keep hot foods at safe temperatures. Cold foods should be 40° F or colder.
- Keep foods cold by placing dishes in bowls of ice or by serving in small batches and replenishing from the refrigerator as needed.
- Say “no” to foods that have been sitting out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Be mindful of co-workers' food allergies when planning your menu.

And finally, when traveling for the holidays, always be sure to keep in mind and practice safe & defensive driving techniques (eyes up, phones down!). Remember, the key to a festive and happy holiday season is making sure it is a safe one!

### Safety & Risk Quote of the Month:



### Safety & Risk Resources & Information:

Additional information & resources on how to stay safe this Holiday season are provided below:

[The gift of Safety \(Video\)– National Safety Council](#)  
[Enjoy a safe holiday season – National Safety Council](#)

### Safety & Risk Fact of the Month:

More than two of every five decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

*(Fact Source: National Fire Protection Association, 2022)*