

HOMESAFETYMATTERS

FALL 2022



DRIVING IN THE DARK

Less sunlight means added danger on the highway

On average, Americans drive at night just 25 percent of the time. But more than half of all fatal accidents happen after dark, according to the National Safety Council. Depth perception, color recognition and peripheral vision can be compromised in the dark, and the glare of headlights from an oncoming vehicle can temporarily blind a driver.

Night driving is dangerous because, even with high-beam headlights on, visibility is limited to about 500 feet (250 feet for normal headlights) creating less time to react to something in the road, especially when driving at higher speeds.

What should you do to combat darkness?

- Aim your headlights correctly, and make sure they're clean.
- Dim your dashboard.
- Look away from oncoming lights.
- If you wear glasses, make sure they're anti-reflective.
- Clean the windshield to eliminate streaks.
- Slow down to compensate for limited visibility and reduced stopping time.

It's especially important for older people to have an annual eye exam so they are safe behind the wheel. A 50-year-old driver may need twice as much light to see as well as a 30-year-old.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Have fun, but keep safety in mind

There is no trick to safely gathering treats when Oct. 31 arrives. It just takes a little foresight. According to the National Safety Council, America's leading nonprofit safety advocate for more than 100 years, ghouls, ghosts and goblins are not the only thing parents need to worry about: Children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day of the year.

Lack of visibility because of low lighting at night plays a factor in these incidents.

Here are some safety precautions to keep in mind during Halloween:

- A responsible adult should accompany young children, even in a familiar neighborhood
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review a route acceptable to you.
- Agree on a specific time children should return home.
- Teach your children never to enter a stranger's home or car.
- Instruct children to travel only in familiar, well-lit areas and stick with their friends.

SERVICE THE FURNACE

Make sure it is in good running order for the colder weather

Fall is a good time to make sure your furnace is operating at peak efficiency. Most furnace emergencies happen because the homeowner has neglected a routine check up and maintenance.

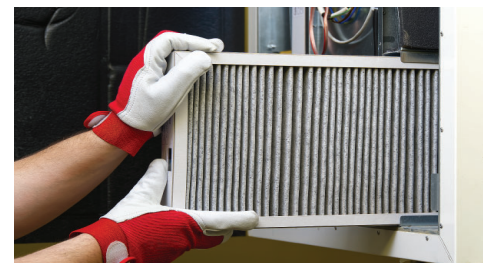
Have a licensed HVAC professional inspect and clean your furnace to make sure it is safe to use and will keep you and your loved ones warm when the weather gets colder.



- Tell your children not to eat any treats until they return home; take care to avoid any food allergies.
- Children and adults are reminded to put electronic devices down, keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street.

It can be scary for motorists, too, as the excitement of getting to the next house may cause some youngsters to forget basic traffic rules. If you must be on the road during peak Halloween hours, the NSC suggests:

- Watching for children walking on roadways, medians and curbs.
- Entering and exiting driveways and alleys carefully.
- At twilight and later in the evening, watching for children in dark clothing.
- Discouraging new, inexperienced drivers from driving on Halloween.



Don't forget to check and replace the furnace filter, if necessary. A dirty filter hinders peak performance.

HAVE A SHOT

Flu season starts in autumn

While a great deal of attention is focused on COVID-19 – and rightly so – it is worth remembering that the flu can also be dangerous, especially to older people, children under age 5, and those with compromised immune systems. The influenza vaccine is a proven way for most Americans to defend themselves against the flu.

Staying healthy:

- The CDC recommends everyone older than 6 months get an annual flu vaccine as soon as the vaccine becomes available. October is the ideal time to get vaccinated, but it's never too late.
- The National Safety Council, a trusted voice throughout the pandemic, also encourages everyone to get a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Avoid being around sick people if possible.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, preferably with the inside of your arm.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated.

RLG WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Food for Thought: Carbohydrates

Did you know?

All food is made up of three main nutrients: carbohydrates, protein and fat. You need all three to stay healthy, but each person needs a different amount.

When choosing carbs, the key is choosing complex carbs — the ones that give you the most bang for your buck in terms of vitamins, minerals and fiber. The three main types of carbohydrates are sugar, starch and fiber.

Tips for adding healthy carbohydrates to your diet:

- When eating grains, choose mostly whole grains and not refined grains.
- Focus on eating fiber-rich fruits and vegetables. Aim for whole fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables.



AUTUMN SAFETY

'Fall back' is a reminder to check the smoke/CO2 detectors

A smoke/carbon monoxide detector with a dead battery is as useful as a car with an empty gas tank.

It is important to replace each alarm at least every 10 years because alarm sensors wear out.

But it is easy to forget to check the batteries. That's why safety experts recommend replacing them when the clock "falls back" to Standard Time on Sunday, Nov. 6, 2022, at 1 a.m.

Remember to replace the batteries when we "spring forward" an hour to Daylight Saving Time in 2023, which will begin at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 12.



Replace each alarm at least every 10 years because alarm sensors wear out. Also, alarms have labels showing when they were made. If you don't see a label, the alarm is old and must be replaced.

And keep the detectors clean. Dust and cobwebs make it harder for alarms to detect smoke.

PAIN-FREE RAKING: Proper form and stretching can cut injury risk

Before you grab a rake, think about how to minimize the risk of injury.

Stretch: "It is important to stretch or warm up the muscles involved in raking leaves beforehand to avoid any injury," said Michael Balandiat, an occupational therapy team leader at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Proper form: Hold the rake handle close to the body and keep one hand near the top for better leverage. Stand with legs slightly bent and weight distributed evenly. Place the forward foot in position first, then follow with the hips and the rest of the body to ensure proper posture.

Try to maintain an upright posture and avoid twisting. Switch hands every few minutes to prevent overuse.

Lift properly: "When lifting bags of leaves, keep the back straight and bend with the knees and hips. Lift manageable loads and allow the legs to do most of the lifting," Balandiat said. "Try to avoid twisting and straining."

Use correct-sized rakes: A rake that is too long or too short will place unnecessary strain on the back, arms, and torso.

Dress for the job: Comfortable shoes with adequate arch



support and non-skid soles provide the support needed, can ease strain on the back, and prevent slipping on wet leaves. Gardening gloves with non-stick palms can help prevent blisters. Wearing loose, breathable layers helps maintain body temperature. Remember to use sunscreen and eye protection, and hearing protection if using a leaf blower.