



Yolo County Sheriff's Office

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Press Release

Subject: Yolo County Sheriff's Office suggests Fall Season Safety Tips

Contact: Mark Persons, Public Information, 530.406.5172

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As the air turns cooler and leaves drop from the trees, it's important to keep a few important fall safety tips in mind. With proper precautions and safety awareness, your family can enjoy that crisp autumn weather while avoiding some of the dangers that come with the season.

***Fire Safety Tips for Fall**

When the weather turns cold most people spend more time inside their homes using fireplaces, furnaces, and heaters to keep warm, there's nothing quite as cozy as a fire, but it presents some safety hazards. Keep these tips in mind.

Service Your Furnace

Before the cold autumn and winter weather sets in, be sure to call your heating and cooling company to service your furnace. A specialist should inspect the furnace to make sure everything is working order and that there are no leaks.

Use Fireplaces Safely

Keep that fire in its proper place by using a fireplace screen to keep sparks from flying out of the fireplace. Never leave a burning fire unattended, and make sure a fire in a fireplace is completely out before going to bed.

Use Caution with Space Heaters

A space heater can be an effective way to warm up a chilly room, but it's essential that you read the instructions on the unit before you use it. If your space heater requires venting, make sure you have vented it to the outdoors. Never use your stove or oven to heat your home; only use space

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heaters that are approved for this purpose. Always allow at least three feet of empty area around space heaters.

Reconsider Leaf Burning

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that burning leaves produces dangerous and cancer-causing chemicals and urges homeowners to avoid disposing of leaves this way. If you decide to burn leaves, wear a protective mask. Burning leaves should only be attempted far away from a house or other structures on a homeowner's property. Always check the weather forecast before starting to burn leaves. This activity should not be attempted in windy conditions.

Exercise Candle Caution

Candles are great way to give a room that warm glow, but they can also cause fires. According to the National Candle Association, almost 10,000 home fires start each year with improper candle use. Never leave candles burning if you go out or go to sleep, and keep your candles away from children and pets.

Change Smoke Alarm Batteries

Change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors when you turn back your clocks for Daylight Saving Time. Make sure to check the alarms with the batteries installed. Check and replace any home fire extinguishers that have expired.

***Safety Tips for Fall Driving**

There's nothing more beautiful than a fall drive, but this season brings some unique hazards for drivers. Being aware of these potential dangers can help keep you and your family safe and prevent accidents.

Be Aware of Poor Visibility

Falling leaves, while beautiful, can obscure your vision, as can rain and fog. Shorter days are part of the fall season, making it more difficult to see children playing or people walking and riding bicycles. Be aware of limitations in your visibility, and slow down if you can't see well. Use your dimmed headlights in bad weather with decreased visibility. If possible, try not to be on the roads when it's hard to see.

Watch For Children

Children love to play in piles of leaves, so use extra caution where leaves are piled at curbside. In addition, the school bus will be making its rounds now that school is back in session. As well as educating children about back-to-school safety, it's important to stay vigilant as a driver.

Slow Down on Wet Pavement



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In many areas of the country, rain is common during the autumn. If it's raining, keep a safe distance from the car in front of you. Wet roads make it more difficult to stop. When wet leaves are on roadways, they make the pavement slippery, and it can be difficult for drivers to get good traction.

Be Prepared for Bright Sunlight

When sunrise occurs later in the morning, it can also present challenges for drivers. Have a pair of sunglasses in the vehicle to wear when the sun is bright is a good strategy. If it becomes too difficult to see because of bright sunlight or glare, a good idea is for the driver to pull over until he or she can see again.

Watch Out for Ice

As the temperatures drop further at night, a driver will need to spend some extra time in the morning scraping frost off his or her vehicle. Shady spots on the roadway may be home to black ice, which a driver may not be aware of until he or she starts to lose control of their vehicle.

***Safety Tips for Fall Boaters**

According to a report from the US Coast Guard, autumn boating accidents are far more likely to be fatal than those that occur during the summer months. Although there are many more boating accidents in the summer season, boaters involved in accidents during the fall months are exposed to cold water and other weather hazards.

Be Prepared for Changing Weather

Since fall weather can change quickly, you should always be prepared for possible cold, windy, and wet weather even if the sun is shining. Stay closer to shore, so you can turn back if the weather changes. Bring appropriate clothing, such as warm coats, rain gear and gloves.

Watch for Signs of Hypothermia

Small open boats combined with cold, wet weather can lead to possible hypothermia. According to the Mayo Clinic, these are a few of the signs you should know:

- Shivering or trembling

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- General lack of coordination, including stumbling and dropping things
- Drowsiness, confusion, and apathy
- Mumbling and slurring of words
- Weak pulse and shallow breathing

Tell Others about Your Trip

Make sure you tell a friend or family member your boating plan and your expected return time. There are fewer boaters in the fall to help in the case of accident or emergency.

Always Wear Life Jackets

Wearing your life jacket, while always a smart move, is even more important in the fall. If you should accidentally fall overboard, the cold water will quickly drain away your strength.

***Autumn Home Maintenance Safety Tips**

Fall is the time for yard clean-ups and readying your house for the cold weather ahead. Keep these safety tips in mind as you work.

Look Up before Pruning Trees

If you have decided that your yard needs to be spruced up by trimming your trees, be sure to look up and survey the area carefully before you start. Make careful note of where power lines are located before you set up your ladder so that it is positioned away from them.

Use Caution on Ladders

Wearing appropriate footwear is important when using a ladder; shoes or boots may be wet, causing you to slip as you climb the ladder. The ladder should be positioned on a flat surface before use. Be sure that the tools you are using are specifically designed for this purpose and are in good condition before starting work.

Clean Up Fallen Leaves

Keep your driveway and walkway clear of falling leaves. Wet leaves can create a hazard for pedestrians in the fall by making sidewalks slippery. Homeowners should mulch or rake up fallen leaves and dispose of them according to local bylaws.

***Safely Enjoy the Beauty of the Season**

By keeping these important fall safety tips in mind, you can be sure you are doing everything you can to protect yourself and your family from seasonal dangers. This will leave your mind free to enjoy the beauty of this glorious season.



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