

Safety Newsletter



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Driving in the Fog

Driving safely on today's roads demands more skill and better judgment than ever before, especially under foggy conditions. Here are some

tips to help get you safely to your destination if you are required to drive in the fog:

- **Turn on the low beams and fog lights.** Day or night, headlights should be on and set to low beam. High beams can worsen visibility as they reflect off the fog.
- **Leave plenty of distance between your car and the one in front of you.** Decreased visibility means longer braking times, so that added space is your friend. In other words, slow down!
- **Use the right-side line of the road to guide you.** Don't be afraid to slow down and drive cautiously along the right side of the roadway. Roadside reflectors can help guide you, as well.
- **Check your mirrors before slowing down, and gently apply your brakes.** The earlier you can start to tap the brakes, the better! Your brake lights will alert drivers behind you that you are slowing down. Signal early, and when you use your brakes, don't stomp on them.
- **Use your defroster and windshield wipers** in foggy conditions to keep the windows clear.
- **Slow down.** Most fog-related traffic fatalities occur because someone was driving too fast and couldn't stop in time to avoid a collision.
- **Wait it out.** If you're having trouble seeing, safely pull over to the right side – well out of the traffic lane – and turn on your emergency flashers. Wait until visibility improves before continuing.

Be Smart When Handling Your Smartphone



Did you know that holding and handling your smartphone the wrong way can lead injury? It is often a repetitive stress injury from long hours of use and awkward hand and arm positions. Many are now getting injuries known as the Selfie Elbow and Texting Thumb. More serious problems such as tendinitis and sore muscles around your arm, wrists and hands are also common with smartphone use.

Smartphone use is now a way of life and it can be difficult to put the phone down when you may be required to use it as part of your work or school activities. To help prevent injury you will first want to minimize the strain on your wrists since this is

the body part that is affected the most with constant texting and swiping at your phone. Start by straightening out your wrists as much as possible by playing with your phone holding technique. Also avoid unnatural movements of the wrist that will put your fingers in an awkward position which can cause additional strain to the thumbs and fingers.

If you are already noticing aches and pains you suspect is from taking too many selfies and texting you can try some of the following to help alleviate the pain of the selfie elbow and texting-thumb:

1. **Do "smartphone stretches".** Taking breaks from constant phone use is important. While you're taking these breaks, be sure to flex your wrist, hand tendons and muscles forward then backward to keep them flexible.
2. **Apply hot or cold compress.** Hot compresses will relax the tendons and muscles around your arm which allows for better movement.
3. **Massage.** Massaging your hand can help break up the ball-like muscles and calm muscle spasms.
4. **Give your thumb a rest.** Your thumb is probably the most used appendage, which can eventually lead to thumb arthritis, tendinitis and contractures. To prevent "texting thumb", you should alternate using your other fingers for typing on the screen. A stylus pen can also help keep your wrist straight.
5. **Use hands-free features on your phone.** If you are experiencing hand pain but absolutely have to send a couple more text messages, switch on your phone to voice-to-text mode so you can give your strained fingers, hands and wrists some rest.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

ICE is an acronym for "In Case of Emergency." Consider adding ICE as a contact to your cellphone. In the event of an accident where you are injured and unable to speak, emergency responders can use your cellphone to find emergency contact information.

Adding ICE to your cellphone is easy. Simply create an emergency contact with the word "ICE" before their name. You can create several ICE contacts by entering ICE-1, ICE-2, etc. Emergency responders around the world are recognizing this as an effective, inexpensive way of accessing emergency information about a victim quickly. The iPhone also has the Health App which includes a section called Medical ID. Consider listing your medical emergency contacts in this area as well as entering ICE into your contacts.



Personal Space Heaters

Many employees are using space heaters in their offices and classrooms, especially during the winter months. The use of a space heater is generally not recommended at school unless approved by a supervisor or administrator. If your space heater is approved for use these general guidelines should be followed:

- The heater must have an Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) safety listing.
- The heater must be equipped with a thermostat control mechanism.
- The heater must have an automatic shut off feature in case it is tipped over.
- You must remove all supplies, paper and combustibles from within 3 feet of the heater.
- You must unplug the heater when it is not in use and when you leave your work station.

Don't Slip Up This Winter

Winter weather is a well-known headache for commuters. But when people arrive at work, they have to face yet another hazard: sidewalks and parking lots that may be slick, wet, or even icy.



To help prevent these incidents, it is important to understand each danger. Common tripping hazards include clutter in walkways, poor lighting, open drawers and uneven surfaces. To avoid slips, trips and falls, try focusing on three main prevention methods:

1. **Housekeeping:**

- Clean up spills as soon as they occur.
- Mark spills with warning signs.
- Mop or sweep up debris from floors.
- Remove obstacles from walkways.
- Secure mats and carpets with tape
- Close cabinets or drawers when not in use.
- Keep workplaces and walkways well-lit.
- Replace burned-out lightbulbs

2. **Flooring:** Walking surfaces can be made safer by replacing unsafe floors, installing mats or adding abrasive strips.

3. **Proper footwear:** Proper footwear is important to prevent slipping and tripping.

To reduce the risks of slips, trips and falls at work:

- Pay attention when walking, and do not rush.
- Walk with feet pointed slightly outward.
- Make wide turns at corners.
- Keep flooring in good condition.
- Have a flashlight handy in case you enter a room with little or no lighting.
- Ensure views are not obstructed.

GET A FLU SHOT

Every year, millions of Americans suffer from influenza, a largely preventable respiratory infection caused by one or more flu viruses. The flu shot is the best weapon we have to fight this common but potentially serious illness.



5 STEPS TO PROPERLY WASH YOUR HANDS

Washing your hands is one of the best steps you can take to help prevent the spread of germs and disease.

When to wash your hands: It's well-known that you should wash your hands after using the restroom, but when else?

- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating a meal
- Before and after providing care for a sick person
- Before and after you provide first aid to a cut or wound
- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing
- After touching garbage

What about hand sanitizers? When your hands are visibly dirty or greasy, hand sanitizers are not as effective as washing with soap and running water. However, if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

Handwashing 101

The CDC recommend following these 5 steps to properly wash your hands

1. Get your hands wet with clean, running water. It can be hot or cold. Turn off the water and apply soap.
2. Thoroughly lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be careful not to overlook the backs of your hands and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands together for a minimum of 20 seconds. Sing "Happy Birthday" twice or do your ABC's.
4. Use clean, running water to rinse your hands.
5. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel, or use an air dryer.

