

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER



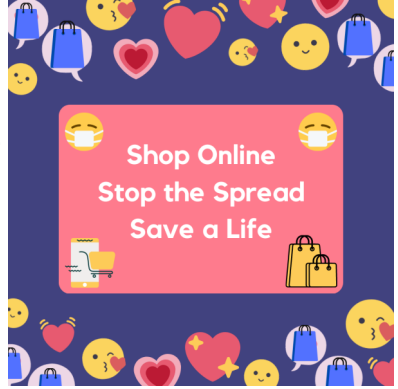
Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management
December 2020



Shop Online—Stop the Spread—Save a Life

December is one of the busiest shopping seasons of the year. With holiday sales such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday, many start the hunt for holiday gifts from Thanksgiving onward. As with everything, shopping may look different in 2020. Take proper safety actions to minimize COVID-19 exposure this shopping season.

1. Shop online when you can and opt for home delivery or curbside pick-up
2. If you cannot shop online, shop during non-peak hours
3. Wear a mask, keep your distance, and wash hands while out
4. Do NOT shop outside of home if you have been exposed or feel sick



We all want to enjoy the holiday season the best we can, but we all play a role as individuals in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in our community and protecting our high-risk neighbors.

Cyber-Safe Holiday Shopping Tips

With the influx of online shopping during the pandemic, it is more important than ever to ensure you are shopping safely online. Holiday scammers and hackers are looking for easy ways to take advantage of shoppers. When shopping online, follow these tips:

- Ship items to a secure location to minimize theft
- Only use official and verified retailer apps to shop
- Don't save credit card information on accounts
- Verify all unfamiliar retailers
- Never make purchases on public Wi-Fi
- Use strong passwords and a password manager
- Never give out your social security number to retailers
- Double-check emails – some can be from outside sources
- Keep an eye on your accounts and statements after purchases

Holiday Season COVID-19 Safety

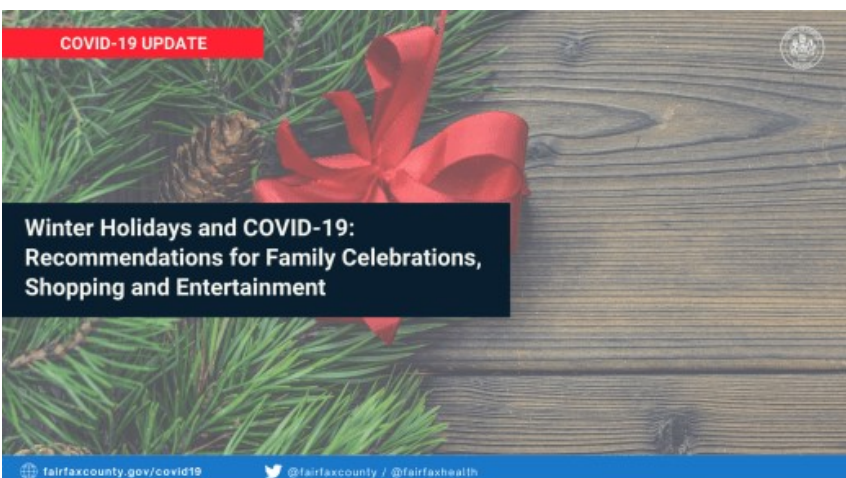
Just like with Thanksgiving, we are encouraging everyone to make safe holiday plans. Protect your family and friends by considering virtual holiday celebrations. Data has shown that small family gatherings inside of the home to be a leading activity for COVID-19 infection. Know your risk and the risk of the activity before planning it. See the blog [here](#).

Lower Risk:

Small dinner with household, food drop-off, virtual dinners, and staying home.

Higher Risk:

Crowded shopping centers, crowded public events, and large indoor gatherings with people outside of your home.



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Child and Adult Masks Still Needed!

Our wonderful community has already donated over 20,000 masks to help keep people safe during the pandemic. The health department is still seeking child and adult sized mask donations.

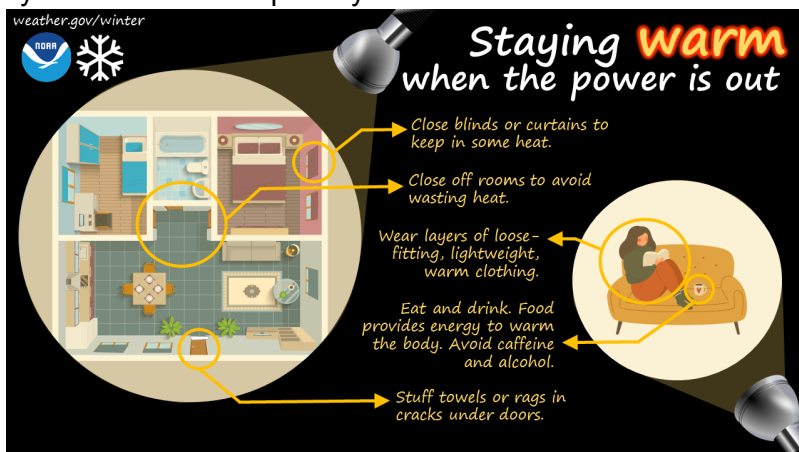
If interested in making a mask donation, contact Tejas Patel at 703-246-3553 or tpatel@volunteerfairfax.org.



Happy Meteorological Winter!

December 1st marks the start of meteorological winter, which lasts until the end of February. During this three-month period, our area can see freezing temperatures and winter storms. Are you winter ready yet? These four action items can help get you started:

1. Sign up for [Fairfax Alerts](#) to receive weather information and road closures.
2. Have supplies in your car in case you are stranded in a winter storm
 - Snow shovel, brush, and scraper
 - Jumper Cables
 - Flares or Roadside Triangles
 - Blankets
 - Food, water, and other essentials needed if stranded for hours
3. Check home heating systems to ensure all are running properly.
4. Create a plan and list any needs that you may have if you were to lose power to your home for multiple days.



Ready to Learn?

Are you a part of a community group, business, school, house of worship, club, or neighborhood association? Are you looking for digital content during your virtual meetings? Look no further!

The Office of Emergency Management and the OEM Volunteer Corps are seeking opportunities to teach emergency preparedness virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our preparedness presentations can cover general preparedness or be tailored to any requested preparedness topic. Presentation length can also be tailored to fit within a general meeting.

If you would like to request a virtual presentation, please email OEM-Outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov.

