

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

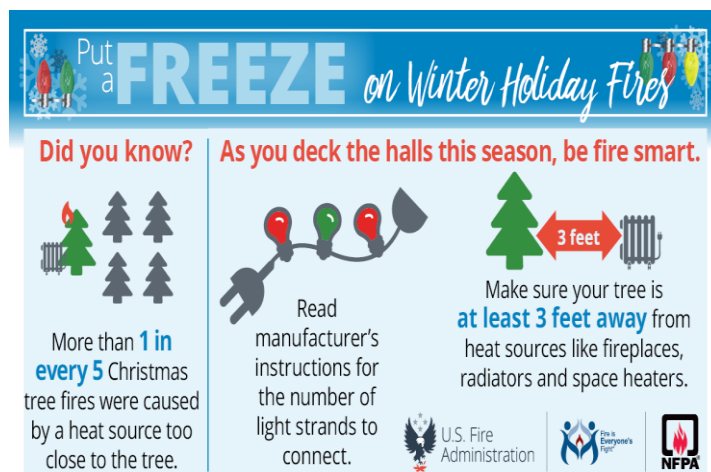


## Holiday Fire Safety

Traditionally, the winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays and cook special meals, but holiday decorations and cooking can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, or fix a festive meal, be fire smart.

Be careful with your holiday decorations. Make sure they don't block windows and doors. Additionally following a few simple tips can make your holidays fire safe.

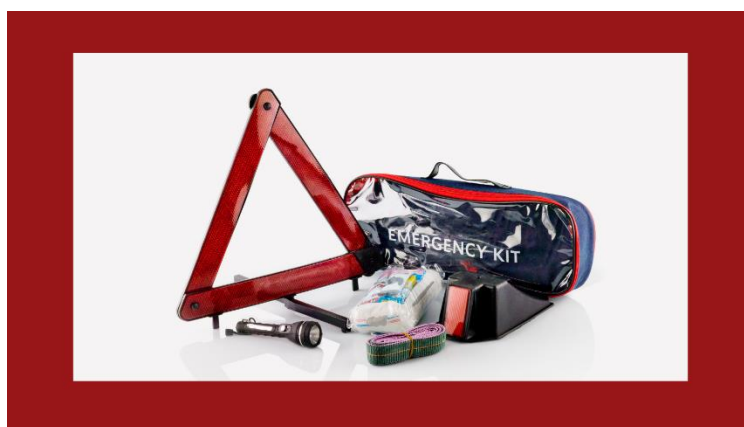
- Water your live Christmas tree every day. A dry tree is a fire hazard. Trees too close to a heat source cause one in every four winter fires.
- Make sure you are using the right lights. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and things that can burn. More than 1/3 of home decoration fires are started by candles
- Blow out lit candles and turn off all string lights and decorations when leaving the room or going to bed.



## Winter Car Emergency Kit

The greatest threat from winter weather is often secondary impacts, such as traffic accidents on icy roads. Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving-related supplies you might need in an emergency, including:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Ice scraper
- Car cell phone charger
- Blanket, or emergency blanket
- Winter hat and winter gloves
- Sand (For tire traction)



## Virginia Department of Transportation 21-22 Northern Virginia District Snow Facts

The Virginia Department of Transportation, or VDOT for short, has 14,142 lanes to plow, including 803 miles of interstate, 1,693 miles of primary roads, and 11,571 miles of secondary roads. Crews work interstates, major roads, and main subdivision roads in priority order. Did you know VDOT uses 3,500 pieces of equipment?

VDOT monitors the forecast closely and mobilizes crews and resources. Trucks report, load, and deploy 12-18 hours before small events and 18-24 hours before large storms. If 2" + of snow is in the forecast, residents may see trucks staged in their neighborhoods.

Anti-icing is done when pavement temperatures are above 20 degrees and weather don't begin as rain to reduces bonding to asphalt and concrete. Depending upon the storm and the window of time, VDOT may perform a partial or full anti-icing treatment of bridges, overpasses, elevated surfaces, primary and/or secondary roads. Did you know that brine is made of 23% salt and 77% water? Brine is sprayed as liquid that dries to create "brine lines" on the pavement.

For more information on what to do during snowstorms, check out the Fairfax County Guide to Snow [Guide to Snow | Snow \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#) The website includes the VDOT plow tracker, which allows residents to check the status of what roads have been cleared of snow. The tracker activates when there's 2+ inches of snow. The guide also includes different ways to contact VDOT, as well as what steps drivers can take to be safe on our roads when needing to drive in the snow.

### Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Comprehensive preparedness requires the whole community to participate and FEMA places tremendous value on communities that embrace a local "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" approach.



**5 Steps to  
Neighborhood  
Preparedness**

scout your area (what resources you have), build your team, and plan your approach. Download the CERG [Community Emergency Response Guide | Emergency Management \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#) and make your neighborhood plan today!



### SNOW BY THE NUMBERS STATEWIDE 2021 - 2022

More than  
**128,000**  
lane miles of state-maintained roads

**9**  
Districts

*ready to go*  
when snow arrives

More than  
**2.4 million**  
gallons of liquid calcium chloride and salt brine

More than  
**10,800**  
pieces of snow removal equipment

More than  
**706,000**  
tons of salt, sand and treated abrasives



**\$211 million**  
set aside for winter weather