



The American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) is a non-profit organization, dedicated to trauma prevention and mitigation through education and advocacy.

For more information visit: www.atspa.org

KEEPING WARM AND SAFE THIS SEASON

As winter's chill sets in, our instinct is to seek warmth and comfort within the confines of our homes. The tips below will help to mitigate the potential hazards associated with heating your home.

Space Heaters: A Hidden Threat

Space heaters are a popular choice for supplemental heating, but they can be deceptively hazardous if not used properly.

- **Fire Hazards:** Older models can become extremely hot and pose a serious fire risk if placed too close to flammable materials like curtains, rugs, or furniture.
- **Overloading Circuits:** Plugging space heaters into overloaded circuits can lead to electrical fires. Always ensure that the circuit can handle the additional load.
- **Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning:** Space heaters fueled by propane or kerosene can emit deadly carbon monoxide if not properly vented. It's vital to use heaters with adequate ventilation and to install CO detectors in your home.

Fireplaces: A Cozy Danger

While a roaring fire can create a cozy atmosphere, fireplaces also come with their own set of potential hazards.

- **Creosote Buildup:** Over time, burning wood in a fireplace leads to the accumulation of creosote, a highly flammable substance. Regularly cleaning the chimney can prevent home fires.
- **Sparks and Embers:** Without a properly functioning screen or glass door, sparks and embers can escape, posing a significant fire risk to your home and belongings.
- **Inadequate Ventilation:** Inefficient ventilation can lead to the buildup of harmful gases, including carbon monoxide. Regular chimney inspections and cleanings are essential to ensure proper ventilation.

Smoke Detectors: Your First Line of Defense

Smoke detectors are often taken for granted, but they play a vital role in keeping your home safe.

- **Neglect and Battery Issues:** Neglecting to regularly test and replace smoke detector batteries can lead to malfunctioning detectors, leaving you unaware of potential fires.
- **Placement Matters:** Smoke detectors should be strategically placed throughout your home to provide optimal coverage. Avoid placing them near windows, doors, or vents, as drafts can affect their effectiveness.

As we seek warmth and comfort during the cooler months, it's imperative that we remain vigilant about the potential dangers associated with heating our homes. We can take proactive measures to keep our homes and loved ones safe and sound throughout the chilly season.

Out of Harm's Way

The Trauma Prevention Publication

NOVEMBER 2023 | Issue 116

TOP NEWS TOPICS

- Keeping Safe and Warm this Season
- Navigating Autumn Roads
- Ensuring Safety in the Kitchen
- Important Notices from the ATSPA
- Latest IVP News and Research

NAVIGATING AUTUMN ROADS: TIPS FOR SAFE TRAVEL

As the leaves begin to turn and the air becomes crisper, the allure of a fall road trip is hard to resist. However, with the beauty of the season comes unique challenges for travelers. From drowsy driving to potential encounters with wildlife, it's crucial to be prepared.

Beware of Drowsy Driving

The shorter days and longer nights of autumn can disrupt our natural circadian rhythms, leading to increased drowsiness during the day. To combat this:

- Plan your travels around peak alertness times, which are usually in the morning and late afternoon.
- Ensure you get a good night's sleep before embarking on a long journey, and consider taking short breaks every couple of hours to stretch and refresh.
- Share the driving responsibilities with a fellow traveler, when possible.

Avoiding Deer Collisions

Fall is mating season for deer, which means they are more active, especially at dawn and dusk. This heightened activity significantly increases the risk of collisions with vehicles. To mitigate this danger:

- Pay close attention to road signs indicating deer crossing areas.
- Be especially cautious when driving near wooded areas or fields.
- Reduce your speed in deer crossing areas.
- Use your high beams when appropriate to increase visibility.

Stay Informed About Vehicle Recalls

Before hitting the road, it's crucial to ensure your vehicle is in optimal condition. Stay informed about any recalls or safety issues related to your make and model. You can check the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](https://www.nhtsa.gov) website or contact your vehicle's manufacturer for information on recalls. Addressing any outstanding recalls will help ensure your vehicle is operating at its best and will minimize potential safety hazards.

Pack an Emergency Kit

No matter the season, it's wise to have an emergency kit on hand in your vehicle. In the fall, however, it's especially important to be prepared for unpredictable weather conditions. By taking the time to assemble an emergency kit, you'll be better equipped to handle unforeseen challenges on the road.

Car Seats in Cold Weather

As a general rule, bulky clothing, including winter coats and snowsuits, should not be worn underneath the harness of a car seat. Use these tips to help keep your child safe:

- Get an early start.
- Dress your child in thin layers. (Just remember to remove the coat and blanket inside the car before putting your child in the car seat.)
- Don't forget hats, mittens and socks or booties.
- Tighten the straps of the car seat harness.
- Use a coat or blanket over the straps.

Remember, if the item did not come with the car seat, it has not been crash tested and may interfere with the protection provided in a crash. [The American Academy of Pediatrics](https://www.aapedia.org) has more information on keeping your child safe and warm this winter.

From combating drowsy driving to being vigilant about deer encounters, and staying informed about vehicle recalls, these precautions can make a significant difference in ensuring a safe and enjoyable journey. Additionally, packing an emergency kit can provide peace of mind, knowing you're prepared for any unexpected situation. So, as you embark on your autumn adventures, remember to prioritize safety and embrace the beauty of the season responsibly.

What to Include in your Emergency Kit

First Aid Supplies: Bandages, antiseptic wipes, pain relievers, and any necessary prescription medications.

Blankets or Sleeping Bags: These can provide warmth in case you become stranded.

Non-Perishable Food and Water: Granola bars, canned goods, and bottles of water can sustain you until help arrives.

Flashlight and Batteries: Essential for navigating in the dark.

Basic Tools: A multipurpose tool, duct tape, and jumper cables can be invaluable in a variety of situations.

Flares or Reflective Triangles: These will help make your vehicle more visible in case of an emergency.

Maps and a Compass: In the event that your GPS or phone battery fails, these can help you find your way.

ENSURING SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is the heart of the home where families gather to create delicious meals and lasting memories. However, it's important to remember that safety should always be the top priority. From cooking, to proper defrosting techniques, there are several key practices to keep in mind to ensure a safe culinary experience.

Preventing Fires and Burns

Kitchen fires and burns are common accidents that can have serious consequences. Taking precautionary measures can significantly reduce the risk of such incidents.

- **Fire Extinguishers and Smoke Detectors:** Ensure that your kitchen is equipped with a working fire extinguisher and smoke detector. Familiarize yourself with their operation.
- **Never Leave Cooking Unattended:** Whether you're frying, grilling, or baking, always stay in the kitchen. Unattended cooking is a leading cause of kitchen fires.
- **Keep Flammable Items Away:** Store dish towels, paper towels, pot holders, and other flammable materials away from the stove and other heat sources.
- **Handle Hot Pots and Pans Safely:** Always use oven mitts or potholders when handling hot cookware. Avoid reaching over the stove with loose clothing that could catch fire.
- **Control Grease Build-up:** Regularly clean stovetops, ovens, and exhaust hoods to prevent the buildup of grease, which can ignite.
- **Use Caution with Oil and Grease:** When deep-frying, use a deep fryer with a thermostat control. Never overfill the pot with oil.

Proper Defrosting Techniques

Defrosting is a crucial step in food preparation, and doing it correctly ensures that the food is safe to cook and consume.

- **Refrigerator Defrosting:** This is the safest and most recommended method. Place the frozen item on a tray to catch any liquid, and allow it to defrost in the refrigerator.
- **Cold Water Bath:** If you need to defrost something quickly, place it in a sealed, leak-proof bag and submerge it in cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes.
- **Microwave Defrosting:** Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using the defrost setting on your microwave. Be cautious to cook the food immediately after thawing.

Cooking to Temperature

One of the most fundamental aspects of cooking safety is ensuring that food reaches the proper internal temperature. This not only guarantees that your meals are delicious, but also eliminates harmful bacteria that could lead to foodborne illnesses. A reliable food thermometer is an indispensable tool in any kitchen. It allows you to accurately measure the internal temperature of meats, poultry, fish, and other dishes.

In the kitchen, safety should always be at the forefront of our minds. By following these guidelines for cooking to temperature, preventing fires and burns, and practicing proper defrosting techniques, you can create a safe environment for culinary exploration. Remember, a safe kitchen is a happy kitchen!

For more information about food safety, visit the [National Fire Protection Association](https://www.nfpa.org).

NOVEMBER 2023 OBSERVANCES

Monthly Observances: *None*

Weekly or Daily Observances:

- November 5-11: [Drowsy Driving Prevention Week](#)
- November 18: [National Injury Prevention Day](#)
- November 23: *Thanksgiving*



**Keep everyone safe this Thanksgiving.
Stay in the kitchen and focus on the food
when you are cooking on the stovetop.**

Safe Temperatures for Cooking

Poultry: 165°F (73.9°C)
Ground meats: 160°F (71.1°C)
Steaks, roasts, and fish: 145°F (62.8°C)
Leftovers: 165°F (73.9°C)

Save the Date National Injury Prevention Day November 18, 2023

For the fourth year in a row, The Injury Free Coalition for Kids and its [National Injury Prevention Day](#) partners are raising awareness and empowering communities to reduce child injuries.

To raise awareness of this day, the ATSPA has arranged to have the lights on the Pennsylvania State Capital building turned green the evening of Saturday, November 18th. If you are in the area, stop by and take a photo.

Nominate NOW! ATSPA Board of Directors positions

If you are interested in applying or want to nominate someone, use this [link](#).

For more information on the opportunity, visit our [website](#).

Latest IVP News and Research

Research

- [Albert RK, Jurkovich GJ, Connett J, et al. Sigh Ventilation in Patients With Trauma: The SiVent Randomized Clinical Trial. JAMA. Published online October 25, 2023. doi:10.1001/jama.2023.21739](#)

- [Ellyson AM, Rowhani-Rahbar A, Mehari KR. Experiences of Violence and Firearm Access and Ownership in the Transition From Childhood to Young Adulthood. JAMA Netw Open. 2023;6\(10\):e2340564. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.40564](#)

News

- [New test for sepsis could save lives in emergency departments, study suggests](#)

- [Glucose Control in the ICU](#)

- [Preventing Heat-Related Illness among Outdoor Workers — Opportunities for Clinicians and Policymakers](#)

Save the Date 2024 ATSPA Annual Conference April 23 & 24 Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square

Registration will open shortly after the first of the year, watch for details.

We hope that you will share this opportunity with trauma nurses, doctors, social workers, EMS Personnel, PT/OT, and others who want to attend.

There is a flyer located on our conference page for you to share with colleagues.

For more information, or to check the status of our planning, visit our [website](#).

Save the Date ATSPA 50th Anniversary Celebration April 23, 2024 Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square

This business attire event will include a reception and dinner.

Please join us in celebrating 50 years of saving lives.

For more information on the 50th Anniversary, visit our [website](#).

Coming Soon! Program Feedback

If you have used one of our programs in the last year, please look for an email that includes a survey about that program. We cannot meet your needs as a member, if we don't know how our programs are working. Please take some time to answer the questions as honestly and detailed as possible.

Stay connected with us:



2 Flowers Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
Email: scarns@atspa.org, Web: www.atspa.org

© All rights reserved by The American Trauma Society, PA Division.

[ATSPA, SCPAHS, and Safe Kids PA Staff](#)

Krista Brands, ATSPA Chief Executive Officer

Allyson Fulton, ATSPA Assistant Director

Kim Nunemaker, ATSPA Educational Program and Event Coordinator

Sadie Carns, ATSPA Communications Coordinator

Matt Frampton, SCPAHS Coordinator

Chris Bendl, SCPAHS Assistant Coordinator

Karen Rowe, SCPAHS Program Specialist

Jessica Ritter, Safe Kids Pennsylvania State Office Coordinator