

December – Holiday Safety

In January 2018, the Naperville Police Department resolved to help our community to become “A Safer Naper” by initiating new safety topics and tips each month to educate residents on how to prevent crime and enhance their safety. Thanks to everyone’s continuous efforts, Naperville was recently named the 2nd Safest City in the United States by 24/7 Wall Street.

In honor of our 24th consecutive month of the “A Safer Naper” campaign, we will be featuring 24 Days of Safety starting December 1. Check back daily or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/napervillepd) or Twitter (www.twitter.com/napervillepd) to keep up with the daily holiday-related safety tips.



Day 1 - Lock It or Lose It

- Don't leave vehicles unattended with the doors unlocked, windows down or the keys in them, even in your garage or driveway.
- Always take your car keys with you and lock your car doors.
- Take valuables with you or keep them out of sight by placing them in the trunk or using stow-and-go seating, preferably before arriving at your destination.
- Park in well-lit areas.

Day 2 – Internet Shopping Safety

- Keep current with your software and virus protection.
- Create strong passwords.
- Ignore emails from senders you don't know.
- Use your pop-up blocker.
- Download files only from sites you know.
- Sign up for email/text "transaction alerts" from your bank to keep track of your purchases.

Day 3 – Safe Decorating

Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness! Also, cut a few inches off the trunk to expose fresh wood to allow for better water absorption, and keep the stand filled with water!

Candles

- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Place candles out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch.
- Make sure you have working smoke alarms.

Lights

- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Before using lights, make sure there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house.

Click here for more helpful decorating safety tips. [[link to full PDF](#)]

Day 4 – Securing Packages on Your Porch

Prevent thieves from stealing your packages by following these simple tips:

- Schedule packages to arrive when you're home.
- Require signature for delivery – This is particularly helpful when you want to be sure important or valuable items are not left unattended.
- Install security cameras – Be sure it is visible and in working order. Cameras only deter criminals if they know one is present.
- Sign up for delivery alerts – Most major shipping companies offer this service. So, if you are not home, you can contact a friend or family member to retrieve the package as soon as it's delivered.
- Have packages delivered to another location, like a trusted neighbor's house, your work (if allowed) or a smart locker.
- Leave delivery instructions – Request your packages be placed in a less conspicuous spot, such as a side or back door, behind a planter or in another location not visible from the street.

Day 5 – You Drink, You Drive, You Lose

Every day, almost 30 people in the U.S. die in drunk-driving crashes. That's one person every 48 minutes and more than 10,000 lives each year. (NHTSA) Here are some tips to protect yourself and others:

- Plan your safe ride home before you start the party, choose a non-drinking friend as a designated driver.

- If someone you know has been drinking, do not let that person get behind the wheel. Take their keys and help them arrange a sober ride home.
- If you drink, do not drive for any reason. Call a taxi, a ride-hailing service, or a sober friend.
- If you're hosting a party where alcohol will be served, make sure all guests leave with a sober driver.
- Always wear your seat belt—it's your best defense against impaired drivers.

Day 6 – Cold Weather Cons

As the temperature starts to dip, scammers are taking advantage of the cold weather by trying to swindle you out of your money.

- The City of Naperville will never call you and threaten to deactivate your heat or electric service due to a past due bill. Scammers are using the idea of being without heat or electric in the cold as a scare tactic.
- If you are overdue on your utility account, the City of Naperville will send you a correspondence in the mail. In most cases, multiple notifications will be sent. No solicitation of payment is done over the phone.
- Beware of "Spoofing Software" that may falsely display the name and phone number of your utility company on your caller ID.
- Scammers use scare tactics such as intimidation and threats to request payment via hard-to-trace prepaid debit cards (green dot) or ask for your credit card information.

Day 7 – Purse/Wallet Safety

Busy stores with distracted shoppers are prime targets for purse and wallet snatchers. Protect your valuables:

- Always keep your purse closed/zipped.
- Never leave your purse unattended or open in a shopping cart.
- Place your purse on your lap in restaurants, not hung over the back of the chair.
- Invest in a crossbody bag that you can wear in front of you.
- Keep your wallet in your front pocket, not the back.

Day 8 – Winter Driving Tips

Stay Alert

- Keep your gas tank close to full.
- If road conditions are hazardous, avoid driving if possible.
- On longer trips, plan enough time to stop to stretch, get something to eat, return calls or text messages, and change drivers or rest if you feel drowsy.

Avoid Risky Driving Behaviors

- Do not text or engage in any activities that may distract you while driving.
- Obey all posted speed limits, but drive even slower if necessary for weather conditions.
- Drive sober. Alcohol and drugs impair perception, judgment, motor skills, and memory – the skills critical for safe and responsible driving.

Driving in Winter Conditions

- Drive slowly. It's harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface.
- On the road, increase your following distance enough so that you'll have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.

- Know whether your vehicle has an antilock brake system and learn how to use it properly. Antilock brake systems prevent your wheels from locking up during braking. If you have antilock brakes, apply firm, continuous pressure to the brake pedal. If you don't have antilock brakes, you may need to pump your brakes if you feel your wheels starting to lockup.

[Learn more here](#)

Day 9 – 9 PM Routine

Humans are creatures of habit. Get into the habit each night of making sure you've secured your home and vehicle and taken proactive steps to combat auto thefts and break-ins. The 9 PM Routine empowers residents to develop their own personal security routines by having a designated time to perform these tasks every night. Set a reminder for 9 p.m. to go through the following checklist to make sure your property is secure:

- Remove any valuables from vehicles left outside overnight. Remember, NEVER leave your keys or garage door opener in your vehicle.
- Lock vehicle doors.
- Close the overhead garage door.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Don't forget to lock the service door from your garage to your house.
- Turn on exterior lights and leave them on until dawn.

Day 10 – Gift Card Scams

Gift cards are for gifts, not for payments. If someone calls with urgent news or a convincing story and then pressures you to pay them by buying a gift card, like an iTunes or Google Play card, and then giving them the codes on the back of the card – stop. It's a scam!

- When purchasing a gift card make sure it does not appear to have been tampered with, or the PIN is exposed.
- Look closely at the sticker covering the security code.
- Don't buy the top gift card right off the rack.
- Register your card (if the retailer offers that option). This makes it easier to track and quickly report any misuse.
- Buy cards directly from the business if possible.
- Beware of bogus gift card ads that pop up on your social media feed and claim to offer exclusive deals online. They may be phony cards.

Day 11 – Using Online Marketplaces

As the popularity of online marketplaces continues to increase, so does our concern for residents' safety when meeting with strangers to complete a transaction that began online.

Please use our lobby at 1350 Aurora Ave. or our new dedicated parking spots to complete these types of transactions! Remember, if someone doesn't agree to meet you at the police department, they're probably not someone you want to be doing business with!

Find more tips at www.naperville.il.us/internetsafesalezone

Day 12 – Holiday Travel Safety

- Ask a trusted person (family, friend or neighbor) to stop by from time to time to check for signs of damage, burst pipes or any other potential problems. Have them pick up unexpected deliveries and random flyers.
- Place a hold on your mail and newspaper deliveries or have someone pick them up every day.
- Ask your neighbor to park a vehicle in your driveway and make arrangements to have someone remove snow from your driveway and walkways.
- Place timers on lights and have them turn on/off at varied times.
- Put your valuables out of sight and lock them up. Close blinds or curtains in rooms with large electronics.
- Put outside lights on sensors so they will go off any time they detect motion.
- Disconnect your garage door opener and manually lock the overhead garage door.
- Remove all spare keys that you may keep stashed under a doormat, plant or rock.
- Make sure all exterior doors and windows are locked as well as the entry door from an attached garage.
- Don't indicate publicly that you'll be away from home on voicemail messages or email autoreplies.
- Wait until after you return home to post vacation photos to social media.

[Click here for more helpful travel safety tips. \[link to full PDF\]](#)

Day 13 – Animal Safety Tips

- Provide a safe haven for your stressed pet to avoid holiday noise and excitement.
- Decorate with pet-safe plants. Many plants such as mistletoe, holly and poinsettias can be toxic to animals.
- Anchor the Christmas tree and avoid using tinsel or edible tree decorations that could be ingested.
- Keep pets away from lit candles.
- Be sure to protect your pets from the outside elements.
- If you suspect animal abuse, cruelty or neglect, call Naperville Animal Crime Stoppers at (630) 420-6006 and leave an anonymous tip.

Day 14 – Mental Well-being

This can be a very tough time of year for many. If you need to, please reach out for help.

Emergency: 9-1-1

Crisis Text Line: Text 'REACH' to 741741

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

Addiction Hotline: 1-800-662-4357

Depression Hotline: 1-877-870-4673

Eating Disorder Hotline: 1-844-228-2962

LGBTQ Support Line: 1-866-488-7386

Veteran Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255

Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673

Day 15 – Seatbelt Safety

Of the 37,133 people killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2017, 47% were not wearing seat belts. In 2017 alone, seat belts saved an estimated 14,955 lives and could have saved an additional 2,549 people if they had been wearing seat belts. (NHTSA)

The consequences of not wearing, or improperly wearing, a seat belt are clear:

1. Buckling up helps keep you safe and secure inside your vehicle, whereas not buckling up can result in being totally ejected from the vehicle in a crash, which is almost always deadly.
2. Air bags are not enough to protect you; in fact, the force of an air bag can seriously injure or even kill you if you're not buckled up.
3. Improperly wearing a seat belt, such as putting the strap below your arm, puts you and your children at risk in a crash.

The benefits of buckling up are equally clear: If you buckle up in the front seat of a passenger car, you can reduce your risk of fatal injury by 45% and moderate to critical injury by 50%.

Day 16 – Be Aware of Your Surroundings

With the hustle and bustle of this time of year, it's important to stay alert, avoid distractions and be aware of your surroundings. By practicing situational awareness, you can avoid being in dangerous situations and even identify criminal behavior. Here are a few tips to help you hone this personal safety skillset:

- **Identify Your Surrounding:** The first step in achieving Situational Awareness is to become aware of what is around you. Identify the type of environment are you in, large crowd compared to a secluded area. Observe other people and their actions.
- **Trust Your Feelings:** Listen to your gut. When you have a feeling that something is wrong, trust it. It is better to be wrong and safe than ignore the feeling and expose you or your family to danger. If you think a crime is about to be committed, call 9-1-1.
- **Avoid Complacency:** Actively keep yourself in the right mindset. Never assume that because you've done something safely before that nothing will happen this time. Continue to challenge yourself and those around you to be prepared for contingencies. Do a mental check every now and then.
- **Have a Plan:** Talking with your family about what to do in different situations will prepare them for when it happens. Knowing what to do beforehand will allow you to stay calm and better handle the situation. Create preparedness and response plans with your family to address likely risks.

Day 17 – Winter Safety Kit for Cars

Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving-related tasks, such as cleaning off your windshield, as well as any supplies you might need in an emergency. Keep the following in your vehicle:

- Snow shovel, broom, and ice scraper.
- Abrasive material such as sand or kitty litter, in case your vehicle gets stuck in the snow.
- Jumper cables, flashlight, and warning devices such as flares and emergency markers.
- Blankets for protection from the cold.
- A cell phone with charger, water, food, and any necessary medicine (for longer trips or when driving in lightly populated areas).

Day 18 – Report Suspicious Activities

Public safety and security is everyone's responsibility. If you see suspicious activity, report it to local law enforcement or a person of authority using the "5W's":

WHO did you see?

WHAT did you see?

WHEN did you see it?

WHERE did it occur?

WHY is it suspicious?

Source: Department of Homeland Security

Day 19 – Keep Valuables Out of Sight

Burglaries to motor vehicles are often crimes of opportunity. Be sure to minimize your risk of victimization while you're out shopping by putting valuables in the trunk or using stow-and-go seating, preferably BEFORE arriving at your destination. And, of course, lock your vehicle and take the keys with you!

Day 20 – Curfew

As of today, school is out and winter break is officially underway! It's important to remember, however, that there are laws that govern when teens can be out in public.

Curfew laws state that it is unlawful for a person under the age of 17 to be out in public during the following times:

- Between one minute after twelve o'clock (12:01) a.m. and six o'clock (6:00) a.m., Saturday and Sunday.
- Between eleven o'clock (11:00) p.m. from Sunday through Thursday, inclusive, and six o'clock (6:00) a.m. on the following day.

There are a number of exceptions. See [Naperville Municipal Code 10-3-1](#). And [Illinois Criminal Code 720 ILCS 5/12C-60](#).

Day 21 - Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is dangerous, claiming 3,166 lives in 2017 alone. Did you know that sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds? At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed. (NHTSA)

Here's how you can help prevent distracted driving:

- **Teens:** Teens can be the best messengers with their peers, so we encourage them to speak up when they see a friend driving while distracted, to have their friends sign a pledge to never drive distracted, to become involved in their local Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter, and to share messages on social media that remind their friends, family, and neighbors not to make the deadly choice to drive distracted.
- **Parents:** Parents first have to lead by example—by never driving distracted—as well as have a talk with their young driver about distraction and all of the responsibilities that come with driving. Have everyone in the family sign the pledge to commit to distraction-free driving. Remind your teen driver that in States with graduated driver licensing (GDL), a violation of distracted-driving laws could mean a delayed or suspended license.
- **Educators and Employers:** Educators and employers can play a part, too. Spread the word at your school or workplace about the dangers of distracted driving. Ask your students to commit to distraction-free driving or set a company policy on distracted driving.

Day 22 – Keep Valuables Out of Sight

Leaving large electronics, wrapped gifts and other valuables in plain sight can tempt would-be thieves to target your residence. Consider closing the blinds or curtains in first-floor rooms, putting items in an inconspicuous container or stowing valuables in a safe.



Day 23 – Move Over. It's the Law.

The "Move Over" Law, also known as Scott's Law, mandates that motorists approaching any police, emergency, or other vehicle displaying flashing emergency lights stopped along the roadway, must:

- reduce your speed
- change lanes if possible
- proceed with due caution

This is a critical step toward protecting the lives of those who protect us.

Day 24 – Enjoy the Season

During the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's easy to get lost in the running around, to-do lists and chaos. We encourage you to take a moment to relax, take a deep breath and count your blessings. Enjoy this time with family and friends and get ready for Safer Naper 2020!

Safe Holiday Decorating

-  Plan your display according to the number and location of available outlets and avoid overloading electrical outlets.
-  Secure lights, decorations and cords to prevent wind damage. Never staple, nail through or fasten electrical wires or extensions cords in any way that might damage the wire or insulation.
-  Any lights you use outdoors must be labeled suitable for exterior placement, and be sure to plug them into a ground-fault circuit interrupter protected receptacle.
-  Carefully inspect all lights and decorations for cracks, damaged sockets and loose or bare wires prior to use.
-  When stringing lights and decorations above your normal reach, make sure you use a proper ladder with someone supporting the base. Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when putting up electrical décor and lights outside as metal ladders conduct electricity.
-  Keep electric cords out of high-traffic pathways and areas. Don't run cords through doorways or hide them under rugs or carpets.
-  Bedtime means lights off! Don't forget to turn off your Christmas tree lights each night.
-  Always place your tree away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and keep the tree base filled with water to avoid a dry out.
-  Keep all your holiday candles away from your Christmas tree, surrounding furniture and décor.
-  Do not put candles in places where they might be easily knocked over, and never leave a lit candle unattended. Extinguish all candles before leaving a room or going to bed.
-  If possible, use battery-operated candles in place of traditional candles to avoid the hazards of an open flame.
-  If you have fragile ornaments, place them out of reach from pets and kids.
-  Avoid decorations that look like candy or food if you have young children or pets in the house.
-  While festive, poinsettias are poisonous when eaten, so keep them out of reach of kids and pets.
-  Keep batteries stored safely in their packaging and out of reach of anyone that might try to eat them, like small children and pets. Eating a battery can be deadly.



For more holiday safety tips, check out our



24 Days of Holiday Safety @ www.naperville.il.us/asafernaper



A Safer
NAPER



Holiday Travel Safety Tips

The hustle and bustle of the holiday season is upon us! If your plans include traveling away from home for an extended time, please take time to think about the safety of your home while you're away.

- * Ask a trusted person (family, friend or neighbor) to stop by from time to time to check for signs of damage, burst pipes or any other potential problems. Have them pick up unexpected deliveries and random flyers.
- * Place a hold on your mail and newspaper deliveries or have someone pick them up every day.
- * Ask you neighbor to park a vehicle in your driveway and make arrangements to have someone remove the snow from your driveway and walkways.
- * Have a neighbor place some of their trash in your garbage cans and place them out for collection with everyone else.
- * Place timers on lights and have them turn on at varied times. If you will be gone for an extended time, have someone adjust the on and off times. You can even have a radio on a timer.
- * Let your trusted neighbors know that you will be away and who they can call if there is a problem.
- * Get your valuables out of sight and lock them up. Close blinds or curtains in rooms with large electronics. Place valuables in a safe or secure them somewhere unlikely or inconspicuous.
- * Have outside lights on a sensor so they will go off anytime they detect motion.
- * Disconnect your garage door opener and manually lock the overhead garage door.
- * Remove all spare keys that you may keep stashed under a doormat, plant or rock.
- * Make sure all exterior doors and windows are locked as well as the entry door from an attached garage.
- * If you choose, you can have a video door bell that will allow you to answer your front door from anywhere. Each time someone rings the doorbell, you'll get an alert on your phone so you can see and speak to the visitor in real time. Some models also have motion detection capabilities, so you'll still get an alert even if the person doesn't actually ring the bell.
- * Don't indicate publicly that you'll be away from home. Don't put anything on your voicemail, email autoreply or social media indicating you'll be gone. Keep your usual voicemail and make your personal or work email autoreply message vague.
- * It's tempting to post your vacation photos in the moment, but your safest bet is to wait until after you return home. If you can't resist, make sure your posts are viewable only to friends and don't mention the exact dates you'll be gone.

For more holiday safety tips check out our
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