



Take Care of Your Home for the Holidays

The holidays are upon us once again and amidst the shopping, cooking, and goodwill, we often forget to think about safety. The following are some important tips to take care of your home, your family and friends during this and every holiday season.

Get rid of ice – Keep your driveway, walkways, stairs and doorways clear of ice to prevent slip-and-falls. Black ice is especially dangerous and can cause serious accidents and injury.

Choose a designated driver – When hosting or attending parties and get-togethers, plan how everyone will get home safely before the party begins and watch out for drunk drivers on the road.

Anticipate fire hazards – Unplug indoor and outdoor decorative lights and blow out any candles when not in use. Many stores have battery-operated, flameless candles that look just as festive as the real ones. Check for broken bulbs and frayed wires before plugging in. Use power strips to avoid overloading electrical outlets.

Be a safe chef – Make sure to turn off the oven after cooking and baking. Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible. Do not reheat anything in the microwave with aluminum foil, Styrofoam or plastic that could melt or cause toxic fumes.

Choose a healthy tree – Keep holiday trees fresh with plenty of water and throw them out soon after you celebrate or if they become too dry. If you purchase an artificial tree, look for one that is fire resistant. Place away from fireplaces, radiators and portable heaters.

Watch out for children – Hang any sharp or breakable ornaments and fragile decorations out of reach of small children and curious pets. Keep an eye on toys with small parts that could choke children. Childproof your house if you are expecting guests.

Hide presents – If you stack presents in the middle of a room or under a tree, keep them out of view of large windows, where a burglar may see them. Check your locks, house alarm and smoke detectors to ensure they are working properly.

Take care of elders – When visiting elders this season, take time to evaluate if they are in need of additional care or services. You may notice their quality of life has depreciated since your last visit. It is also a good idea to think about future and long-term planning for caregivers, Medicaid, insurance and social security disability benefits.

Plan effectively for the New Year – Your resolutions could include creating an estate plan, making a will and securing asset protection for your home.

Wash hands and bundle up – It is especially important to take care of yourself during the season, so wash hands often with soap to avoid spreading germs and stay warm by dressing in layers. Manage your time wisely to avoid stress and enjoy the holidays!

SPILLANE LAW OFFICES
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Quincy Office ~ 1212 Hancock Street
Hanover Office ~ 1140 Washington Street
P: (617) 328-9100 | F: (617) 328-8373
www.spillanelawoffices.com
www.facebook.com/spillanelawoffices