



Health and Safety Committee Newsletter



Health and Safety Information for Your Holiday Season

(Managers: Please post in your communication binders)



NEED A SHOVEL? WHERE'S THE SALT?

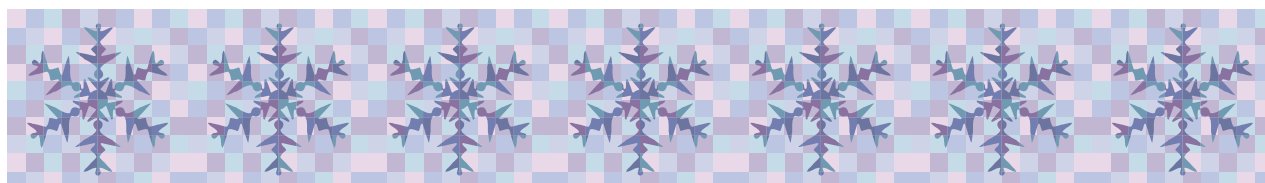
With winter at our doorstep and snow forecasted around the corner, it is important that each of our locations has outdoor salt and snow shovels easily accessible to keep our steps, walkways and sidewalk safes for staff and our folks.

Check your home now before the snow falls and before there is a rush of consumers to purchase these items and be prepared ahead of time.

Driving on Snowy Days



Did you know that due to the exceptionally snowy weather last year, “the number of crashes on B.C.’s roads jumped from 23,000 in November to 32,000 in December as record-breaking snowfall hit much of the province” (ICBC website)? ICBC offers a number of [tips for winter driving](#) but the safest plan is to stay off the roads. Especially on the first day of snow or during snowfalls, when the roads are the worst and other drivers are least prepared, please stay home or take transit when you are with our folks.



HOW TO DRESS FOR THE COLD WINTER WEATHER...



We want our staff and folks to be cozy warm in these next winter months, so it is important to ensure that prior to heading out into the cold that you:

- Dress in layers. Wear a warm winter coat, winter boots, mittens and a hat.
- Cover your face with a scarf, but do not obstruct your vision.
- If it is icy make sure that proper footwear is worn to prevent falling.
- Avoid being outside for extended periods of time. If you do need to be outside, then stay inside.
- If any of our folks are taking medication for heart or circulatory problems, check with their doctor before exercising outdoors.
- Check our folks for signs of frostbite or hypothermia when outside.
- If feet, hands, or other parts of the body get wet from snow or rain, head back inside and change into a warm, dry clothes immediately.

Even when bundled up, staying out too long in the cold is dangerous. If feet, hands or other body parts start to tingle, burn or lose feeling, go inside IMMEDIATELY!

Importance of safety on **OUTSIDE** stairs and walkways:

Pedestrian safety is also an important consideration during the snow and icy season. Remember the following during the winter months:

If a sidewalk is cleared and available, use it.

Don't take chances with moving vehicles. Vehicles will have a harder time stopping during winter months, and your chances of slipping and falling on icy surfaces are greater as well. Keep your driveway and walks clear.

Remove all snow and ice adjacent to emergency exits.

Keep snow and ice cleared from outside stairs

Ensure that there is adequate light on outside stairs

Now is the time to go and purchase outdoor salt for driveways, sidewalks and stairs

Now is the time to ensure there is a snow shovel at your programs

Examine the steps and decide if they are safe, if they are unsafe, then use tools such as the shovel and salt to better protect your staff, the folks we support and any visitors approaching the front door.



We wish you a safe, happy and festive holiday season with your folks, family and loved ones!



FOOD SAFETY FACTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

What is foodborne illness? Food contaminated by bacteria, viruses and parasites can make you sick. Many people have had foodborne illness and not even known it.

It's sometimes called food poisoning, and it can feel like the flu. Symptoms may include the following:

- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- fever

Symptoms can start soon after eating contaminated food, but they can hit up to a month or more later. For some people, especially children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems, foodborne illness can be very dangerous.

Health Canada estimates that there are as many as 13 million cases of foodborne illness in Canada every year. Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented by using safe food handling practices and using a food thermometer to check that your food is cooked to a safe internal temperature.

It's always important to keep foods out of the danger zone, which is between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F) to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. To do this, just keep hot foods hot, at least 60°C (140°F) and keep cold foods cold at 4°C (40°F) or lower.

Preparing and serving holiday buffets

Do not let foods linger during preparation, cook them thoroughly and serve them promptly.

Provide serving spoons and tongs for every dish served. Even finger foods, such as cut vegetables, candies, chips/nachos and nuts, should have serving implements to prevent contamination between guests.

Leftovers: Storage and Reheating

While it is tempting to leave turkey and other foods at room temperature for snacking after a meal, you should refrigerate all leftovers promptly in uncovered, shallow containers so they cool quickly. Refrigerate once steaming stops and leave the lid or wrap loosely until the food is cooled to refrigeration temperature. Avoid overstocking the refrigerator to allow cool air to circulate freely.

Reheat solid leftovers to at least 74°C (165°F). Bring gravy to a full, rolling boil and stir during the process. Use leftover turkey meat, bones, stuffing, gravy and other cooked dishes within four days for best quality or freeze for later use.