

Turn to Us

Winter 2021



5 COMMON HOLIDAY-RELATED ACCIDENTS

AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Holiday decorators fall from:

- **Ladders**
- **Roofs**
- **Furniture** (e.g., standing on a table decorating a Christmas tree or standing on a chair to hang decorations)
- **Stairs**
- **Porches**

Holidays are considered days to take it easy. In reality, holidays are typically very active. The winter holiday season from November through January is always an active period each year where many people let their guards down and injure themselves or others in accidents.

Our accident lawyers at Marzzacco, Niven & Associates often see a rise in calls from accident victims after the holidays. We hope our lawyers can be of assistance by telling you about the following common holiday accidents and how you can avoid them.

DECK THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS OF HOLLY

Thousands of people are injured each holiday season by falling off ladders and chairs as they put up decorations. A study by the CDC estimated that more than 5,800 men and women are injured in fall-related injuries attributed to holiday decorating or related activities.

People also may sustain fall injuries by tripping over or slipping on holiday-related objects, such as tree skirts, ornaments or an extension cord.

By far, most holiday decorating falls involve using ladders or using something to substitute for a ladder. **These accidents can be avoided by using ladders properly:**

- **Ensure the ladder is on a level surface and the areas around its top and bottom are clear.**
- **For every 4 feet in height, space the bottom of the ladder 1 foot from the wall.**
- **Extend a ladder at least 3 feet beyond the edge of a roof.**
- **Stay centered between the ladder's rails.**
- **Move the ladder instead of overreaching.**
- **Make sure stepladders are fully opened and locked.**



HOLIDAY FIRES

In a December 2017 alert, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) focused on fires caused by Christmas trees and candles. It said that about 100 Christmas tree fires and 1,200 fires caused by lighted candles cause injury, death and tens of millions of dollars in property damage each holiday season. When decorating with a recently cut Christmas tree, make sure it is green and its needles do not fall out easily, which means it is fresh. The bottom of a fresh tree is sticky with resin. Set a tree up away from heat sources, such as HVAC vents, radiators or fireplaces, and away from foot traffic. **Check its water level every day. Here are more tips to help keep you safe this holiday season:**

- Check tree lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections.
- Throw out damaged strings of lights.
- Be sure to use indoor lights on a tree indoors.
- Check extension cords and do not use cords with cuts or signs of fraying.
- If you burn candles, make sure candles are on stable, heat-resistant surfaces where children and pets cannot reach them or knock them over accidentally.
- Keep lit candles away from trees, decorations, curtains, furniture and other items that can catch fire.
- Never leave a candle burning. Put all candles out before leaving the room.

SLIPPING ON SNOW OR ICE



Snow and ice are natural hazards. If you are a property owner, you may have a legal obligation to deal with snow and ice on sidewalks, steps, or driveways on or adjacent to your premises. **Here's how:**

- Once snowfall ends, shovel your snow.
- Then spread an ice-melting product, such as rock salt.
- Some commercial products are designed to be used before snowfalls. Be sure to read labels and follow precautions about these chemicals.



WINTER SPORTS ACCIDENTS

BAD WEATHER CAR ACCIDENTS

Snow and ice on roads create another winter hazard that is sometimes unavoidable. It's not just us. Federal statistics say about 5,000 lives are lost and more than 418,000 people are injured each year across the nation in bad weather car accidents. When you must drive on wet or icy roads, the best advice is to slow down and allow more distance between your car and the cars ahead of you. ***Here's what to keep in mind this winter:***

- **Stay about 20 seconds behind other cars in case they stop suddenly.**
- **Signal well in advance of lane changes or turns so other drivers have time to slow down and give you room.**
- **Avoid hard braking, because braking can send your car into a skid.**
- **Slow down by easing up on the accelerator when possible.**
- **If your car begins to skid, turn in the direction of the slide.**

If you find yourself a victim of an accident this holiday season, turn to our accident lawyers at Marzacco, Niven & Associates for advice on seeking compensation you may be entitled to.

Cabin fever during the holidays never really hurts anyone. But a suddenly active older family member or more energetic youths can be injured in impromptu fun and games during family gatherings. Sudden strenuous activity can cause injuries. Teenagers injured in sports and recreation typically suffer strains, sprains, head injuries and broken bones. ***Here are some things to keep in mind:***

- **Take a moment to assess abilities and to stretch or warm-up. Know your limits.**
- **Check winter equipment not used in several months, such as sleds and ice skates.**
- **Adults who join in the fun need to make sure older youths lookout for smaller kids who are taking part.**
- **Adults should keep an eye on competitive games, such as football, so they remain friendly and no one overdoes it.**
- **Make sure everyone knows how to get help if injuries occur.**
- **It's also important when playing outdoors during winter to seek medical attention promptly if anyone exhibits symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite.**

Before the holiday season is in full swing, we hope you'll take these precautions to avoid any accident. We want you and your family to have a safe and happy holiday. As always, if an accident happens because of someone else's negligence, Marzacco, Niven & Associates is here for you.