



Safety and You at ISU

By ISU Public Safety &
the ISU Safety Committee
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Ten Tips for Handling Holiday Stress

Here we go again. Presents to buy, work to finish up, cards to write, plans to make, events and parties to attend: and all those things we "must do" because we've always done them. Does this sound familiar? Do you go to sleep at night with the feeling that you are hopelessly behind schedule, yet have made good use (overuse) of your time? Do you experience even a small measure of dread as you approach this season, and a large measure of relief when it's all over? Most importantly, are you pausing to savor any of the lovely sights, sounds, smells and feelings that are unique to this time of year; or are you just too tired and rushed to even notice? If this describes you, you are probably suffering from holiday stress. Compounding this is the widely held belief that this is just the way it has to be, and that your task is to just get through it.

The following tips are designed to give you a new perspective on this all too common problem. Read on, and see if you can make some small behavior changes/additions that could result in a lot less stress and a lot more enjoyment in the weeks ahead.

1. If you have a fairly sizeable family/extended family to shop for, your level of monetary, time and emotional stress can be very high. Therefore, consider approaching your family about your present tradition of gift exchanging. Growing in popularity is the system of drawing one name (of one family member) to buy a nice gift for. Everyone in the family receives one gift that another member had the time (and budget) to choose well. If your family is resistant, you could opt for two gifts per person, or some other compromise.

2. Try a new tradition of having a shopping day with friends or family. Draw up your list, head for a nice mall or town center with great little shops - which may be less crowded which is even better - and make it a day of shopping, lunch and lattes. You could finish with a late afternoon movie!

3. Consider on-line shopping. This is a great way to save time and get free gift-wrapping without the lines and headaches. It also allows more time for you to choose just the right gift for each person. You can have them mailed to you or sent to whatever address they will eventually be going to.

4. If you send cards, consider after Christmas cards or New Year's cards. Why rush to send them before Christmas? The folks who receive them will have more time to focus on your news after Christmas, and may even find it more fun to receive something in the mail during the quiet "let down" period that follows each holiday.

5. Try to plan a few extra days off right before or during the December-January holidays. Even one extra day could be useful to pack, get an early start on travel, finish up last minute chores or errands, or catch up on sleep and R&R. We often mistakenly assume we will feel more rushed and behind if we take down time-the reverse is actually what occurs.

6. Do an inventory of your must-dos. After you make your list, go through each one and ask yourself is this activity really gives you pleasure or serves your needs or the needs of a loved one. Cross off any that don't answer yes to the above question. Make sure you are not doing things out of rote because that's the way it has always been. If you have one or two you are unsure of, put them at the end of your list of priorities. This way, you can get to them if you have time after you have done the things you know will be of the most value to you.

7. Consider having a cleaning service come in at least once during the next month. Imagine the extra time (and low stress) you would have if someone else cleaned your bathroom and kitchen, washed your floors, dusted your furniture, etc. What a nice gift to give yourself!

8. Arrange to have a massage, facial, manicure or other spa treatment. These are wonderful stress relievers. They are especially nice late in the day at the end of a hectic few days. Afterwards, you can go out for a quiet meal or go home and

get some low stress things done and then get a restful night's sleep.

9. Make sure you are doing some kind of regular exercise. This should be part of your life 52 weeks of the year. However, during high stress periods, it is more important. It is a fact that exercise increases energy and positive self-esteem and decreases depression. It is also a way to improve sleep and keep your weight in check.

10. Try to get some extra sleep. You will probably have to begin decompressing a little sooner than usual on those nights. Don't eat dinner too late, or eat anything too heavy. Avoid alcohol those nights. Get ready for bed and lie down with a good book or in front of a favorite show. If you exercised earlier, this will help you to be more relaxed and ready to sleep. Even one hour three times a week will make a difference in your mood and energy level.

Read these suggestions over carefully and consider which ones might be useful to you. After you have begun to implement them; take a deep breath, sit back, and drink in some of the lovely sights, sounds and smells of this cherished season.



"In the old days, it was not called the Holiday season: the Christians called it "Christmas" and went to church; the Jews called it "Hanukkah" and went to synagogue; the atheists went to parties and drank. People passing on the street would say "Merry Christmas!" Or "Happy Hanukkah!" or (to the atheists) "Look out for the wall!" - Dave Barry, "Christmas Shopping: A Survivor's Guide"

"I heard the bells on Christmas Day. Their old familiar carols play. And wild and sweet the words repeat, Of peace on earth good will to men."
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Winter Storm Preparedness: Weather Radios and Disaster Supply Kits

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With winter rapidly approaching, every family should be prepared to face another season of destructive cold, storms and flooding. Every home should have a Disaster Supply Kit that includes a weather radio. The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urge all residents to act now to assemble their family's emergency supplies before the start of the winter storm season.

The National Weather Service forecasters provide routine weather programming at all times. During life-threatening weather conditions, the radios send out a special alarm tone. This is critical, because weather can turn deadly very fast. Ice Storms and flash flooding are two examples which can occur when people are sleeping or unaware of the forecast. Both can be deadly if people do not have an emergency plan or enough warning so that they can get to a safe place.

With a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, you will be alerted to dangerous weather and have time to take shelter. NOAA Weather Radios also broadcast warnings and information regarding technological disasters, such as chemical releases or oil spills. They can be purchased at most stores that sell electronic devices. Most run on batteries or have battery back-up.

Every home should be stocked with a supply kit and when storing the supplies, keep them easily accessible in case of an evacuation.

A Disaster Supply Kit should contain the following:

- Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days
- Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days Non-perishable packaged or canned food / juices, foods for infants or the elderly, snack foods, non-electric can opener, cooking utensils / fuel, paper plates, plastic utensils
- Blankets / Pillows, etc.
- Clothing - seasonal, rain gear, sturdy shoes
- Medical supplies - first aid kit, medicines, prescription drugs
- Special Items - for infants and the elderly
- Toiletries - hygiene items
- Moisture wipes
- Flashlight - extra batteries
- Radio - battery-operated and NOAA weather radio
- Cash - (Banks and ATMs may not be open or available for extended periods.)
- Important documents - in a waterproof container Insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, social security card, etc
- Keys
- Toys, books and games
- Tools - keep a set with you during the storm
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled
- Pet care items Proper identification, immunization records, ample supply of food and water, a carrier or cage, medications, muzzle and leash.

Visit www.Ready.gov, and www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm for a thorough look into disaster preparedness and a more detailed list of emergency supplies. Also, www.Ready.gov/kids is an excellent resource for information on how to involve children in the process of assembling the family's Disaster Supply Kit.



ISU's Snow Closure Policy



With the approach of winter, Public Safety has issued a reminder about the University's **snow-closure policy**. Public Safety maintains a school closure information line, x3936. When a decision is made to close the university, a message will be placed on the snow-closure line for both the Pocatello and Idaho Falls campuses. Local radio and television stations also will be notified. An additional notice will be posted on the [ISU homepage](#) and on the [ISU Public Safety Web page](#). For information specific to the Idaho Falls campus, call x7825. For more information about the policy, call x2515.

Wash Your Hands

*According to health professionals around the world, our best defense from all the colds, flu and the sick yuck we suffer from each winter is **"washing your hands."***



And the Grinch with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons, it came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more." Dr. Seuss