

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Health and Safety Newsletter. In this edition we will have some healthy eating, travel safety, and NFPA Christmas tree fire prevention tips along with a great Christmas recipe. The Vedder Transportation Group Health and Safety Committee would like to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas. Enjoy the holidays and time with your friends and family. Merry Christmas everyone.

Unlike a one-time splurge at Thanksgiving, holiday eating in December is a marathon. There are the office parties, dinners with friends and family gatherings that surround you with cookies, eggnog and candy canes.

Santa isn't the only man to indulge over Christmas. A registered dietician Carrie Regan suggests that on average, Canadians gain around one to five pounds over the holiday season. On Christmas Day alone, consumers could eat about 6,000 calories – about three times more the daily average.

Here are a few tips to help keep you in the same pant size for the New Year:

1. Don't skip breakfast: You may think this is a good way to save calories, but Regan says that starting the day off with a healthy meal and sticking to three balanced meals per day are key – have a bowl of oatmeal, or an English muffin with eggs, fruit and vegetables.
2. This is what your plate should look like: Half of your plate should be filled with vegetables, a portion of turkey should cover about a quarter – or about the size of a deck of cards – of the plate, and the last quarter can be used for half of a cup of potatoes and half of a cup of stuffing. To make your plate healthier, reach for the colourful vegetables – broccoli, red peppers and beets for example.
3. Make modifications: If you're eating turkey, go for the white meat and skip the skin that adds extra fat and calories. Instead of mashing potatoes with butter and



cream, roast them in olive oil. Make your own cranberry sauce to control the amount of sugar in the side dish and when it comes to gravy, let the turkey juices rise and skim the fat off the top.

4. The most dangerous dishes on the table are the vegetables cooked in creamy sauces: You know the candied sweet potatoes and the broccoli topped with cheese sauce aren't good for you. No, you can't coat your peas and carrots in melted butter either. Reach for steamed vegetables or flavor them with olive oil, lemon and herbs and you'll save about 150 calories per serving, Regan estimates.

5. Watch out for the holiday sabotages: Regan says a cup of eggnog has 350 calories and 19 grams of fat without

the rum. That's almost a meal in itself. A single slice of pecan pie has 500 calories and 37 grams of fat between all of the nuts, sugar and butter. If you're going to have some, limit yourself to a taste of either to shave off some calories, Regan suggests.

6. Don't socialize near the food: "You want to avoid recreational eating. The only thing that needs to be stuffed is the turkey," Maniatis joked. Portion control is important during the holidays when you're eating and socializing all of the time. After having your meal, stay away from the buffet table so you avoid mindless grazing.

7. Stock your home with healthy ingredients: When you aren't out for dinner or at a friend's house, make sure your own fridge is stocked with fresh fruit, vegetables, lean proteins and healthy snacks. If you're heading to a potluck, you gain some control by bringing a nutritious dish to eat.

8. Watch what you drink: The sugary sweet cocktails are packed with calories, Regan warns. And if you're ordering a latte, go for skim milk and skip the whipped cream. At dinner, go for a wine spritzer and make sure you're using club soda instead of tonic water in your drinks. There's about 125 calories in a class of tonic water while soda water is calorie-free.

10 .Play in the snow: If you overdid it over the holidays, don't beat yourself up about it, Maniatis says. But do what you can during the break: Fit in some exercise throughout the day, if it's a stop to the gym, a walk outside or taking up skating, snowshoeing or skiing. And in the new year, you can wipe the slate clean.

Christmas tree safety tips

Each year, fire departments respond to an average of 210 structure fires caused by Christmas trees. Carefully

decorating Christmas trees can help make your holidays safer.

Don't be this guy...



Picking the tree

- If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant.
- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

Placing the tree

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1" - 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

Lighting the tree

- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

After Christmas

- Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Check with your local community to find a recycling program. Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.



Travelling by Car During the Holidays? Here are a few tips to help you prepare and stay safe.

This time of year, even in Vancouver, the roads can become slippery and you may encounter black ice.

- Have directions and check road conditions before you set out - DriveBC | Weather Network
- Always wear a seatbelt
- Stick to well-travelled roads when possible and take a cell phone and car charger for emergencies
- Ensure your car is in good mechanical condition and that you have appropriate tires for the road conditions you may encounter
- Have the correct car seats for children and make sure they are installed properly ICBC | BCAA
- Keep an emergency kit and blankets in your trunk
- If you need to use your GPS or your cell phone, pull over to the side of the road when it's safe to do so
- Advise someone of your travel route and the times you plan to leave home and arrive at your destination



Chocolate Peppermint Bark

Generally we try to choose a healthy recipe. Its Christmas so here is a tasty treat. Enjoy, just don't over indulge.



Total Time: 20 minutes
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

Serves: 20-30
Yield: 1.5 pounds
12 ounces quality white chocolate
12 ounces quality dark chocolate
1/2 cup crushed peppermint candy

Directions:

1. Line a 9x12 pan with parchment paper.
2. Melt the dark chocolate (use the method you prefer, either double boiler, or microwave - cook 30 seconds in a heat-proof bowl, stir and repeat until you have a smooth consistency.

3. Pour the melted dark chocolate on the parchment paper, spread the chocolate out until it is about 1/3" thick. You can do this by hitting the pan on the countertop repeatedly, or maybe you could use a spatula to spread the chocolate.

4. Melt the white chocolate, using the steps above. After the chocolate is smooth, pour it on top of the dark chocolate - trying to make the layers the same thickness. (it's best to do this step while the white chocolate is still very soft -- I've had them separate when I broke them into pieces, I think the layers "stick" together better if the white chocolate has not hardened).

5. Unwrap the starlite mints, or peppermints of your choice and put them into a heavy duty ziplock bag. Using a hammer or meat tenderizer - crush the mints then, while the white chocolate is still melted sprinkle on top.

6. Let the chocolates harden in the refrigerator for 2 hours, then break the candy into pieces. This needs to be stored in the refrigerator if you live in a warm/humid climate.