

Dear Chief:

Are there any tips or reminders you can provide that will help keep us safe as we enter the holiday season?

Dear Citizen:

Absolutely, I have listed several tips below:

Alcohol, Parties, and Driving:

- As a party host or attendee, please remember to designate drivers who have not been drinking.
- Be considerate, by keeping noise and activities inside your home as much as possible so as to not disturb your neighbors.
- Give yourself extra time when planning shopping outings so you don't have to hurry and endanger yourself and others with poor driving.
- With the holiday season comes colder weather, precipitation, and diminished road conditions. Make sure you have extra clothing, food, water and other survival items should you become stranded.

Trees and Decorations:

- If you have a natural tree, keep it watered to reduce the fire danger.
- If you have an artificial or metallic tree, make sure it is flame retardant.
- When disposing of your tree, haul it away and don't burn it in a fireplace or wood burning stove.
- Inspect your holiday lights before using them. Bare spots, frayed wires, cracked sockets and excessive kinking can be dangerous.
- Don't overload electrical outlets; connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into an outlet.
- Don't leave holiday lights on Candles lit while unattended.
- Don't discard wrapping paper in a fireplace or wood burning stove.
- Keep candles at least 12" from anything that can burn.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on hand and make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.

Security and Shopping:

- Keep trees and gifts away from windows and out of the direct view of those who pass by your home.
- Keep your home's exterior well-lit and outside shrubs and bushes trimmed.

- Have someone collect your mail, newspapers and other items if you go on vacation.
- Consider having a neighbor or family member park a car in your driveway occasionally to give the appearance someone is home.
- Tell only those you trust that you will be away from your home.
- Contact the Alamosa Police Department and request a “special watch” when you will be away from your home.
- When shopping, be sure to keep things you purchase out of sight in your vehicle; placing items in the trunk is a good option.
- When shopping, don’t carry large amounts of cash, wear expensive jewelry and be cognizant of your surroundings at all times.
- If you don’t have to, don’t shop alone.

From all of us at the Alamosa Police Department we wish you a happy and safe holiday season.

Craig Dodd, Chief of Police