

Company Hours If you are planning a visit to our office later in the day, please call ahead for hours. Some circumstances may cause our office to close earlier than listed below:

Field Crew Hours Monday - Friday 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

Office Hours Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday and Sunday CLOSED

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE - CLOSED

Thursday December 24, 2020

Friday, December 25, 2020

Thursday, December 31, 2020

Friday, January 1, 2021

Monday, February 15, 2021

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As Winter Season Fast Approaches, Vigilance Around Home Fire Safety is Critical

With the pandemic continuing to impact our work and daily lives in countless ways, this year has been anything but typical. At times, these shifts and challenges have made it difficult to remain focused on business as usual. However, we can't afford to be distracted from keeping communities safe as the coldest months approach and the public's risk to fire increases; vigilance remains critical.

Home fires are more common in November through March with multiple contributing factors at play: Cooking fires, the number-one cause of home fires year-round, increase during the holiday season with more cooking fires occurring on Thanksgiving Day than any other day of the year; Christmas Day, the day before Thanksgiving, and Christmas Eve follow as the top winter days for home cooking fires. Holiday decorations involving candles, electrical lighting, and Christmas trees contribute to a rise in home fires during the winter months as well. Meanwhile, as temperatures drop nationwide, heating equipment jumps to the leading cause of home fires

Now add the pandemic to the mix. As people continue to spend more time at home, they'll be doing more cooking and home heating throughout the day, ultimately spending more time engaging in activities that collectively increase the likelihood of home fires.

With these potential hazards on the horizon, we must proactively take the steps needed to mitigate them now. Waiting until tragedy strikes and responding after the fact is too late.

Many of the traditional plans and efforts to reach the public clearly aren't safe options at this time, but there are still opportunities to engage and connect, as evidenced during Fire Prevention Week this past October. In communities large and small, fire departments throughout the U.S. and Canada found creative ways to promote the campaign's messages, from virtual and "drive by" open houses and motor vehicle parades, to TikTok and YouTube videos promoted online and social media, and partnerships with food pantries, restaurants and other local businesses. These examples of dedication and effort should be a model for all of us as we work to keep our communities safe in the months ahead, particularly given the challenges and limitations presented by the pandemic.

With these ideas as a starting point, I strongly encourage all public safety educators and professionals to create a plan for increasing awareness around winter fire safety and prevention. Tap into the tools and information at your disposal, including NFPA's public education resources, as well as materials provided by other fire and life safety organizations. Use social media to effectively and efficiently deliver those messages to as many people as possible. Connect with peers to learn how they're working to reach residents. Share obstacles you're facing so that you can get the help and support you need to work through them.

Getting through the winter months during a pandemic will be trying for all of us, but putting the time, energy and resources into protecting communities remains critical to fire safety at home - the very place people are at greatest risk to fire. Getting distracted from those efforts is a risk we simply can't afford to take.

49 Fun Winter Activities You Can Still Enjoy (Even During a Pandemic)

As the coronavirus pandemic stretches into nearly a full year of impacting our daily lives, it can feel like it's hard to find any fun in your day-to-day routine. (Life at home can feel a lot like Groundhog Day—and not in a good way.) Finding winter activities that bring you joy may be even more of a challenge as temperatures drop, when it's not as easy to get together with family and friends safely because of the weather. Winter officially begins December 21 (and there are plenty of fun things to do in December normally), but with cold weather common well before then in many parts of the country and indoor activities unavailable or unsafe, you may be looking for great outdoor winter activities or things to do at home when it's cold out before you know it. But even if you're socially distancing and spending more time at home to reduce the chances of developing COVID-19 or passing it on to others, with a little creativity, you can still find some wonderful ways to enjoy the season (and reconnect with your loved ones in a safe way) with clever winter activities during coronavirus. Cross some of these things to do this winter off of your list while you're still quarantining—or start dreaming of these wonderful things to do in spring once the weather shifts.

Winter activities during coronavirus:

Enjoy the outdoors (socially distanced)

- Have an epic snowball fight
- Go sledding
- Try friluftsliving (outdoor living in nature, open-air living)
- Make a snowman or a snow fort with people in your household
- Go snowshoeing
- Make snow angels
- Go stargazing
- Take a wintry hike
- Try ice skating

Get a taste of winter

- Load up a cup of cocoa with whipped cream or marshmallows
- Bake a pie
- Sip a hot toddy
- Make baked apples
- Restart your sourdough addiction
- Make homemade caramel popcorn
- Roast root vegetables
- Enjoy some mulled wine
- Simmer a pot of homemade soup
- Make snow cream
- Indulge in a big stack of pancakes slathered with maple syrup
- Make (and enjoy) eggnog
- Have a little fondue

Try some wintry crafts

- Build a gingerbread house
- Cut paper snowflakes
- Make a birdfeeder out of pinecones, peanut butter, and birdseed. Place it near your window for a show

- Create handmade valentines
- Knit a scarf

Enjoy some much-needed self-care

- Cozy up by a roaring fire (indoors or out!)
- Watch the snow fall
- Burn your favorite scented candle
- Light candles and enjoy a bubble bath
- Break out a jigsaw puzzle
- Cuddle up with a blanket, a cup of tea, and a good book
- Spend the day in your PJs
- Work on a challenging crossword or word game
- Splurge on a pair of fuzzy slippers

Reconnect with loved ones

- Bake cookies to share with your friends and neighbors
- Build a pillow fort
- Enjoy a living room picnic
- Host a movie marathon of all your favorites
- Eat dinner by candlelight
- Write a love letter
- Plan a virtual game night

Try something new

- Take an online cooking class
- Pick up a new hobby
- Encourage an amaryllis bulb or other flowering plant to bloom
- Start some seedlings
- Host a virtual book club
- Stick with a New Year's resolution

SOURCE: <https://www.realsimple.com/holidays-entertaining/entertaining/seasonal-events/winter-activities-during-covid>