



Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

December 10, 2019

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Helping the Elderly with the Holidays



For most of us, the holidays are a wonderful time to share the joys of family life and friendship. But for many older adults the holidays can be highly stressful, confusing, or even depressing if their mental, physical and emotional needs are not taken into account. If you have older friends and family members with underlying health issues, you can help them enjoy the holiday season more by following these simple tips;

Stroll down memory lane. Holidays provoke memories, which can be especially powerful in the later years of life. Older people whose memories are impaired may have difficulty remembering recent events, but they are often able to share stories and observations from the past. These shared memories are important for the young as well—children enjoy hearing about how it was ‘when your parents were your age...’. Picture albums, family videos and music, even theme songs from old radio or TV program can help stimulate memories and encourage older seniors to share their stories and experiences.

Plan ahead. If older family members tire easily or are vulnerable to over-stimulation, limit the number of activities they are involved in or the length of time they are included. The noise and confusion of a large family gathering can lead to irritability or exhaustion, so schedule time for a nap, if necessary, and consider designating a “quiet room” where an older person can take a break and/or someone to be the day’s companion to the older person, to make sure the individual is comfortable. These guidelines work well for young children as well as adults with mental, emotional & physical health issues.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

HELPING THE
ELDERLY WITH
THE HOLIDAYS

HOLIDAY SAFETY
TIPS

COMING SOON:
COMMUNITY
POLICE
ACADEMY

Eliminate obstacles. If a holiday get-together is held in the home of an older person with memory impairment or behavioral problems, don't rearrange the furniture. This could be a source of confusion and anxiety. If the gathering is in a place unfamiliar to an older person, remove slippery throw rugs and other items that could present barriers to someone with balance problems or who has difficulty walking.

Excerpt from Seniorliving.about.com

Holiday Safety Tips

Decorate Your Tree With Kids in Mind

- Kids are curious and will want to play with the ornaments on the tree, so you might as well prepare. Move the ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks towards the top of the tree. That makes room at the bottom for the ones that are safer for young kids.

Water the Tree Regularly

- Natural trees look beautiful and smell great, but if they're not watered regularly, needles can dry out and pose a potential fire hazard. Make sure your tree has plenty of water by checking it regularly.

Check the Lights

- Lights are one of the best parts of holiday decorating. Take a look at the ones on your tree and in and around your home for exposed or frayed wires, loose connections or broken sockets.

Blow Out Candles & Store Matches Out of Reach

- Keep holiday candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn, and don't forget to blow them out when you leave the room or before you go to sleep.
- Make a habit of placing matches and lighters in a safe place, out of children's reach. Avoid novelty lighters or lighters that look like toys.



Continued on page 3

More Tips

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even for a few minutes.
- When leaving home for an extended time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail. Also, MVPD offers a [Vacation Watch](#) service.
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be on an automatic timer.
- Leave a radio or television on so the house looks and sounds occupied.
- Large displays of holiday gifts should not be visible through the windows and doors of your home.
- When setting up a Christmas tree or other holiday display inside your home, make sure doors and passageways are clear.
- Be sure your Christmas tree is mounted on a sturdy base so children, elderly persons or family pets cannot pull it over on themselves.
- Never place Christmas wrapping paper in your fireplace (some paper may contain harmful chemicals; light materials like paper can rise up the chimney aflame and cause a fire).





2020 Community Police Academy

In mid-January please visit
[Facebook.com/MapleValleyPolice](https://www.facebook.com/MapleValleyPolice) or
[King County Sheriff Precinct 3](#)
for an application and details.

This FREE 10-week course is presented by our most experienced officers and detectives. You'll learn first-hand what law enforcement trains for and gain insights to your local law enforcement agency.

The academy runs every Thursday evening from 6 – 9 p.m. and is currently slated for March 19 – May 21

*Candidates 18 and older with a clean criminal background will be selected for the Academy.
Class size is limited to 25*