Home Safety Tips for the Holidays

The NOVA Police wish you a wonderful and safe holiday season. With the holidays fast approaching, please review the helpful safety tips below:

**Don’t announce your vacation plans on social media.**
Facebook or Twitter posts about your vacation can make your home a target; burglars will know when you’ll be away. Don’t help them plot the perfect time to burglarize your home.

**Know thy neighbor.**
Tell a trusted neighbor when you’ll be away and ask him or her to pick up your newspaper so it looks like someone is home. Your neighbor can also look out for suspicious activity and notify the police if something seems amiss.

**Don’t leave hints on the curb.**
Throwing out the box from your new flat-screen TV tells everyone passing by that you now have a new flat-screen TV. Break down packaging before taking it to the curb.

**Landscape to your advantage.**
Prune back shrubbery to eliminate potential hideouts for thieves. Overgrown foliage gives burglars a way to conceal themselves as they attempt to gain entry into your home.

**Install sensor lighting.**
Motion-sensor lights outside your home will deter burglars. Anyone approaching your home will be visible to you and any passersby.

**Conceal your valuables.**
Don’t leave your valuables out in the open at home or in your car where they can easily be spotted. Hide jewelry and expensive items out of sight in a safe, a drawer, a glove compartment, etc.

**Install an alarm system.**
Alarm systems can be expensive, but if you don’t want to spend the money on one, you can attempt to trick potential burglars. Put an alarm system sign in the front of your home and stickers on the windows so burglars think your is protected. A home that may have an alarm system that immediately notifies the police is a less appealing target to a potential thief than a house that lacks such a system.

**Set timers for lights.**
By setting your lights on a timer, you create the illusion that someone is home and actively turning the lights on and off.

**Install window treatments.**
Use blinds or curtains, especially at night. If burglars can see inside your home, they can see what you’re doing (and what you have). Window treatments make your life (and valuables) more private.
Drunk Driving Facts

NOVA Police recently partnered with Fairfax County Unified Prevention Coalition to help keep young adults safe and drug free. At our Fairfax campuses (Annandale and MEC), you will find posters reminding everyone of the consequences of alcohol and drug use (picture top left). At our non-Fairfax Campuses, posters around campus promote responsible and legal driving (picture top right).

- Drunk driving causes approximately one-third of all traffic fatalities in the United States.
- During 2007, alcohol-impaired driving was involved in the deaths of nearly 13,000 Americans.
- According to the law in all 50 states, a driver is considered to be legally drunk when his or her blood alcohol content (BAC) level is at or above .08.
- It takes approximately six hours after drinking for the body with a BAC level of .08 completely to eliminate alcohol from its system.
- Even at BAC levels as low as .02, alcohol can affect a person’s response time and driving ability. The probability of a crash increases significantly after .05 BAC, and even more rapidly after the body reaches a .08 BAC level.
- Drivers are far more likely to be alcohol impaired during the night than during the day. In 2007, 36% of drivers involved in nighttime fatal crashes were legally drunk versus just 9% who had daytime collisions.
- The highest rates of drunk driving occur among drivers aged 21-24. This age group makes up 35% of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal collisions.
- Drugs other than alcohol (such as marijuana and cocaine) are involved in approximately 18% of fatal motor vehicle collisions. Often, they are used in combination with alcohol.

*Drunk driving facts do not lie. Do what you can to avoid becoming a statistic.*
As winter approaches, the Office of Emergency Management would like to remind the NOVA community of the College’s inclement weather procedures. If the College is going to be closed, a text alert will be sent to cell phones registered with NOVA Alert, a notice will be posted on the home page of the College’s website, and major local media outlets will broadcast the closing information. If the College closes early due to inclement weather, an email will be sent to all faculty, staff, and students with the closing time.

Also, this Fall, the College adopted a new closing procedure for faculty and staff. If the College closes early due to inclement weather, faculty and staff will be required to leave 30 minutes after the time listed in the closure announcement. For example, if the announcement states the College will close at 2:00 p.m. due to inclement weather, students will be allowed to leave at 2:00 p.m. However, faculty and staff will be required to stay until 2:30 p.m. to help students exit the buildings and campuses safely.

For more details on the College’s inclement weather procedures as well as a listing of media outlets that will carry the College’s closing and delay information, check the Office of Emergency Management’s website at [www.nvcc.edu/emergency](http://www.nvcc.edu/emergency). Please do not contact Police Dispatch for closing updates.

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Pedestrian Safety Initiative at Annandale

On November 18th and 26th, the NOVA Police Department partnered with the Fairfax County Police Department to conduct a Pedestrian Safety Initiative at the Annandale campus. Officers monitored major on- and off-campus cross-walks and educated pedestrians and drivers about the rules of the road regarding pedestrians. Pedestrians and drivers received handouts on pedestrian safety tips and Virginia code sections regulating pedestrian behavior. Through this initiative, over 150 pedestrians and vehicles received safety information while traveling on and off campus. The AN Provost, Dr. Barbara Saperstone, met with participating officers and thanked them for their dedication to the safety of the campus community.
Winter is Coming. Get ready now!

Several record-breaking snowstorms have covered Virginia in recent years, and winter is right around the corner! Winter Preparedness Week is December 1-7. NOVA’s students, faculty, and staff can get ready for bad weather by taking a few easy steps. Familiarize yourself with NOVA’s Inclement Weather Procedures. If the College is going to be closed, a text alert will be sent to cell phones registered with NOVA Alert, a notice will be posted on the College’s website, and major local media outlets will broadcast the closing information.

Be safe on campus.
- Have sturdy boots with good soles for walking.
- During winter weather, walk carefully on sidewalks and pavement.
- When outside, wear layered lightweight clothing to keep warm. Layers work better than a single heavy coat to help you stay safe on the road:
  - Ice scraper for windows
  - Shovel and broom
  - Water and a few nonperishable snacks (crackers, granola bars, trail mix)
  - Flashlight
  - Emergency flares
  - Sand, rock salt or even kitty litter (fresh) to give you traction if you get stuck
  - Extra socks, gloves, and a blanket

Get a kit. Imagine you can’t leave your home for three days. You will need these basic emergency supplies:
- A three-day supply of food that doesn’t need refrigeration or electricity to prepare it.
- A three day supply of water (a gallon per person per day).
- A battery-powered and/or hand-crank radio and flashlight, with extra batteries.
- After you have these essentials, add a first aid kit, supply of prescription medications, blankets and warm clothing, supplies for special members of your household, and pet items.

Make a plan. Everyone needs an emergency plan:
- Identify an out-of-town emergency contact.
- Where will you meet up with family members if you can’t return home?

Stay informed. Before, during, and after a winter storm, you should:
- Listen to local media for information and instructions from emergency officials.
- Be aware of winter storm watches and warnings and road conditions.
- Get road condition information 24/7 by calling 511 or checking www.511Virginia.org.

Download the Ready Virginia app. This helpful emergency planning tool for iPhone® and Android™ mobile devices features:
- Location-specific weather watches and warnings issued by the National Weather Service.
- Disaster news from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.
- A customizable family emergency plan that can be easily shared.
- A checklist for gathering emergency supplies.
- Contact information for local emergency managers.
- Links to register for local emergency alerts, and more.

It’s time to get ready for winter weather now! Get more information at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.
Crimes Against Women / Self-Defense Considerations

NOVA Police will conduct campus-wide training sessions on responding to crimes against women and self-defense considerations. If you are interested in this or any other training, please RSVP to NOVA Police’s Community Outreach Officer, Tony Ong at tong@nvcc.edu.

Topics Include:
♦ How to avoid Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking.
♦ What to do if you are a victim.
♦ Police guidance on relevant topics (i.e., protective orders, police reporting options, and more.)
♦ Demonstrations of self-defense responses and tactics (this will NOT be a hands on session for participants)
♦ Resources in your community

Dates/Locations: (Rooms TBD)
♦ January 27, Alexandria Campus 11 am-1 pm; Loudoun Campus 3 pm-5 pm.
♦ January 28, Annandale Campus noon-2 pm
♦ January 29, Manassas Campus noon-2 pm
♦ January 30, Medical Education Campus 11 am-1 pm; Woodbridge Campus 3 pm–5 pm.

Bystander Intervention Training

Topics Include:
♦ What is Bystander Intervention?
♦ How Bystander Intervention can keep you and others safe.
♦ Intervention tips and more.

Dates/Locations: (Rooms TBD)
♦ February 10, Annandale Campus noon-1 pm; Medical Education Campus 2 - 3 pm.
♦ February 11, Alexandria Campus noon-1 pm.
♦ February 12, Manassas Campus noon-1 pm.
♦ February 13, Loudoun Campus noon-1 pm.
♦ February 14, Woodbridge Campus noon-1 pm.