



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Connecticut Valley Chapter

## NOVEMBER

### MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

World Freedom Day (9th)  
Sadie Hawkins Day (13th)  
Clean Out Your Fridge Day  
(15th)  
Thanksgiving Day (25th)  
Small Business Saturday (27th)

## FRIDGE TRIVIA

- The fridge is more efficient if it has more items in it.
- The first commercial household fridge was produced by General Motors in 1911
- In Pennsylvania, it is illegal to sleep outside on a refrigerator.
- Food stored at or below zero degrees F is safe indefinitely.
- You should not put hot or warm food inside the fridge. Let it cool first.
- The refrigerator maintained a temperature a few degrees above the freezing point of water.
- 15% of American households have two refrigerators.
- Don't forget National "Clean out Your Refrigerator Day is November 15th!

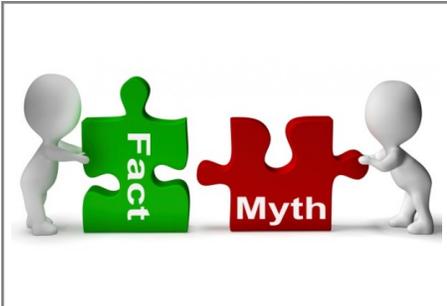
## NOVEMBER SAFETY TOPICS

There are a number of things in November to focus on for toolbox talk topics to help keep your employees safe. We often look to the calendar for inspiration but November doesn't offer a lot of topics for safety talks from the national days alone. But the holiday calendar does remind us that Thanksgiving is in November and that one holiday provides a host of safety topics to cover.

### *Thanksgiving*

One of the first things you think about when you think about Thanksgiving is food—from turkey and all the fixings to pie, there usually isn't a shortage of delicious food when celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday. But when it comes to food safety, your mind should also go to the possibility of food poisoning. Talking about food safety with workers can help everyone stay safe this holiday season. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that approximately 1 in 6 Americans (48 million people) get food poisoning each year, and half of these incidents occur around the holidays. There are a number of factors that can contribute to holiday foodborne illness, from rushing to prepare a meal for a large group to fatigue, which is almost always a factor around the holidays. Not to mention that some cooks may simply not be aware of the food preparation risk factors that can contribute to people becoming sick. You may also want to think about the food that's in the shared refrigerator at work—some of the condiments or leftovers may now be considered a science experiment, and it's time to get rid of them. When preparing your toolbox talk, you can revisit the list of tips from September's National Food Safety Education Month topic.





## Drowsy Driving Myths

### **Myth 1: Coffee can overcome drowsiness while driving.**

False. Although caffeine may make you feel more alert, only sleep can truly overcome drowsiness. People who take stimulants while severely sleep deprived are likely to have “micro sleeps,” which are essentially four- to five-second naps. A vehicle travelling 55 mph can cover more than 100 yards in four to five seconds – plenty of time for an accident.

### **Myth 2: I can tell when I am going to fall asleep.**

False. While most people feel they can control and predict when they are about to fall asleep, they cannot. Often, when a person is drowsy they can fall asleep without even being aware of it.

### **Myth 3: I’m a safe driver so it doesn’t matter if I’m sleepy.**

False. The only safe driver is an alert one. When sleepy, even the best drivers become confused and use poor judgment.

Another unfortunate issue that comes with the holidays is fire. According to the NFPA, Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires. Most home cooking fires involve the kitchen stove so it’s a good idea to review some cooking safety tips in your toolbox talk, even if they seem like common sense. If someone questions what home fires have to do with workplace safety talks, be sure to mention the impact that an employee who experiences a home fire would have on downtime, production and absence rate.

One final thought about Thanksgiving safety is travel. People often travel when they have time off of work—even if a family visit isn’t happening, a sight-seeing drive can also affect safety. Be sure to incorporate some travel safety tips into your toolbox talk that includes the dangers of inclement weather and the need to ensure the vehicle is roadworthy and topped up with washer fluid, oil, test wipers, check the radiator, cooling system and tire pressure (all things that often strand motorists on the side of the road). It’s a good idea to make sure a roadside emergency kit is stocked and ready in the event that it’s needed. Another great toolbox talk idea would be to discuss the emergency kit—these are often forgotten about once they are tucked safely into the trunk (if there’s one in the vehicle at all).

### *Drowsy Driving Prevention Week*

One thing that impacts workers regardless of their position or workplace is fatigue. Drowsy Driving Prevention Week is from November 1–8, 2020. This is a prevalent, serious issue for every industry. The National Sleep Foundation determined that half of U.S. drivers admit to regularly driving while feeling drowsy. Although being drowsy doesn’t sound all that serious, it is the same as driving impaired—but without the same social stigma that impaired driving has.

According to the NSC, being awake for more than 20 hours is the same as being drunk. Even if driving isn’t a function of a person’s job, they will still often drive to and from work. The NSC research also concluded that you are three times more likely to be in a car crash when you are fatigued. Educating employees on drowsy driving prevention will ensure they arrive safely to work and return home the same way. Fatigue impairs both mental and



physical performance by reducing alertness, attentiveness, reaction time and coordination.

By intervening with tips to avoid fatigue, you'll notice improvements in areas other than just driving. The risk of many types of incidents is higher when people are tired and have slower reaction times and reduced attention. For some easy-to-share toolbox tips, check out our free resources on fatigue.

### *Tie One on for Safety*

A campaign by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Tie One on for Safety details impaired driving safety education. This initiative began in 1986 and is one of MADD's largest awareness campaigns that starts November 1st and lasts throughout the holiday season. A red ribbon is placed on a visible location on a vehicle to symbolize the driver's pledge to drive safe and sober. It also serves as a good reminder for other drivers who see it. For this November toolbox talk, use impactful stories from MADD to reach employees about the devastating impact of impaired driving. The number of drunk driving crashes increases significantly over the holidays—conducting a safety talk on this topic could potentially save the life of one of your employees or their loved ones. Don't forget SafeStart's critical error reduction technique to look at others for the patterns that increase the risk of injury while driving. You could also relate this toolbox talk back to your drowsy driving toolbox talk since both issues could produce the same devastating results.

### *Disease prevention*

Since flu activity peaks between December and February, November is a good time to think about preventing the spread of communicable diseases. A toolbox talk outlining everyday preventive actions could be more powerful than you think. A few years ago SafeStart published a post on What to Do About the Flu in the Workplace, where you will find some great prevention tips for your talk. If you used August's suggested topic of National Immunization Awareness Month, a lot of the work for your talk may already be done for you. Don't worry about the repeat in topic, as repetition is a great way to emphasize the importance of your message. If your company offers an immunization clinic, now is a good time to educate workers on the benefit of getting their flu vaccine and encourage them to attend your clinic. The recent pandemic may have left you with some items like hand-washing posters that can help reinforce your toolbox talk.

### *Carbon monoxide poisoning*

Carbon monoxide poisoning is more common during the winter months as people increase their use of heating devices. Known as the silent killer, carbon monoxide is hard to detect because you can't see it or smell it. Any living or work area that is heated with a gas or wood-burning appliance that is not properly maintained (or is in a space that is not properly ventilated) is susceptible to carbon monoxide poisoning. A good toolbox talk on the subject will detail the early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, like nausea, headaches, dizziness, a sore throat/cough, and abdominal pain. It's important to note that these early-indicator symptoms should not be ignored. A quick test to see if someone with symptoms is



experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning is to get them outside into the fresh air—symptoms should begin to disappear once outside.

## TURKEY-DAY FUN FACTS

- An estimated 240 million turkeys will be raised in the U.S. this year.
- The TV dinner was invented thanks to Thanksgiving. In 1953, a Swanson employee ordered too much turkey - 260 tons too much! The frozen turkeys were taking up space in 10 refrigerated train cars when a company salesman suggested preparing and packaging the turkey with sides in compartmentalized aluminum trays. Swanson sold 5,000 TV dinners in 1953. The following year, they sold 10 million.
- The largest pumpkin pie ever baked weighed 3,699 pounds and measured 20 feet in diameter. It was grown in New Bremen, OH by the Giant Pumpkin Growers. It took 1,212 pounds of pumpkin, 109 gallons of evaporated milk, 2,796 eggs, 525 pounds of sugar, 7 pounds of salt, and 14.5 pounds of cinnamon.
- Big Bird's costume on Sesame Street is made of turkey feathers that have been dyed yellow.
- "Jingle Bells" was originally a Thanksgiving song. It was composed by James Pierpont in 1857 for children celebrating Thanksgiving.
- Up until 1932, balloons from the New York parade were released into the sky when the festivities were over. Macy's offered a \$50 reward for those who found a deflated balloon and returned it. Unfortunately, it was a horrible idea because the giant balloons would burst after clearing the skyline.
- Black Friday is the busiest day for Rotor-Rooter, a major plumbing service. They are called in to clean up "overwhelmed" sewer systems.
- Not all states were eager to adopt Thanksgiving because some thought the national government was exercising too much power in declaring a national holiday.
- Baby turkeys are called poults. Only male turkeys gobble and therefore, are called gobblers.

## CAPTION CONTEST

Join Us! The object of the contest is to write the funniest "safety related" caption to accompany the Safety Photo of the Month.

The winning entry for October is: "Now for a slip, tip, and flip, off the old block!" Congratulations to Rick Kaletsky for your entry and your humor!

The November photo in need of a caption is:



Submissions should be emailed to Laura Casey and place "Caption Contest" in the subject : [casey@safeconsolutions.com](mailto:casey@safeconsolutions.com)

CORRECTION: The October Caption that was printed was incorrect. Rick was the winner, but the correct caption should have been listed as: "Yes, it's a drill... and a falls alarm!" Sorry Rick!



## Welcome New Members

Welcome to the chapter! We are excited to have you with us! We hope to see you at a meeting soon!



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