

## **December 2024**

### **A Safer Naper --- Seasonal Safety**

Just like the seasons, safety is cyclical. As the seasons change, so should our focus on what we need to do to keep ourselves and our families safe! This December, the Naperville Police Department's Safe Naper campaign will help you do just that by refocusing your safety habits to address upcoming winter weather and the busy holiday season.

#### **SECTION 1 – WINTER DRIVING**

##### **Stay Alert**

- Keep your gas tank close to full.
- If road conditions are hazardous, avoid driving if possible.
- On longer trips, plan enough time to stop to stretch, get something to eat, return calls or text messages, and change drivers or rest if you feel drowsy.

##### **Avoid Risky Driving Behaviors**

- Do not text or engage in any activities that may distract you while driving.
- Obey all posted speed limits, but drive even slower if necessary for weather conditions.
- Drive sober. Alcohol and drugs impair perception, judgment, motor skills and memory – the skills critical for safe and responsible driving.

##### **Driving in Winter Conditions**

- Drive slowly. It's harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface.
- On the road, increase your following distance enough so that you'll have plenty of time to stop for vehicles ahead of you.
- Know whether your vehicle has an antilock brake system and learn how to use it properly. Antilock brake systems prevent your wheels from locking up during braking. If you have antilock brakes, apply firm, continuous pressure to the brake pedal. If you don't have antilock brakes, you may need to pump your brakes if you feel your wheels starting to lock up.

**Winter Safety Kit for Cars** – Carry items in your vehicle to handle common winter driving-related tasks, such as cleaning off your windshield, as well as any supplies you might need in an emergency. Here are a few suggestions:

- Snow shovel, broom and ice scraper.
- Abrasive material such as sand or kitty litter in case your vehicle gets stuck in the snow.
- Jumper cables, flashlight and warning devices such as flares and emergency markers.
- Blankets for protection from the cold.
- A cell phone with charger, water, food and any necessary medicine (for longer trips or when driving in lightly populated areas).

#### **SECTION 2 – CELEBRATING SAFELY**

Whether you are hosting or attending a holiday party, please keep safety in mind when you are making your plans. If you plan on serving alcohol at your holiday party, here are some things you'll want to consider.

**Plan Well:** Keep the ages of your attendees in mind, along with how they will be getting to and from your party. Consider scheduling your holiday party for during the day, rather than the evening.

**Serve Food Early and Often:** Start serving food at the start of the event so attendees are not drinking alcohol on an empty stomach and make sure there is food available near the end of the gathering, as well. Also, consider including a meal that requires sitting down and eating. This allows a natural break (or slowing down) of the drinking and prevents attendees from filling up on drinks out of hunger.

**Provide Non-Alcoholic Drinks:** There should also be plenty of non-alcoholic drink options. For a variety of reasons, not all your guests may drink; think about minors in attendance and designated drivers to name a few. From fizzy sodas to mocktails, create some variety for your non-alcoholic menu. Offering non-alcoholic drink options beyond water helps all guests feel included and can prevent overconsumption.

On that note: Let the ice water flow plentifully! Leave pitchers or bottles of water on the tables. It's easy to unintentionally neglect to drink enough water when you have a cocktail in hand, but by leaving water out and accessible, you are reminding guests to stay hydrated throughout the night.

**Don't Make Alcohol the Focus of The Event & Limit the Number of Drinks:** Keep why you're getting together at the forefront of the event. The purpose is not to get intoxicated, it's to enjoy each other's company and celebrate the holiday season with family and friends. This means your event should have more to it than just drinks and food. Plan for entertainment, games, music, dancing and/or activities for attendees to participate in.

**Get your Guests Home Safely:** When attendees arrive ask them how they will be getting home and who is driving. Encourage attendees to have a designated driver, but also have a backup plan just in case. Have all your attendees contact you (call or text) to let you know they've arrived home safely.

### **SECTION 3 – MENTAL HEALTH**

Whether you're caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season or navigating something more profound, the Naperville Police Department is committed to helping residents protect their mental health and practice self-care during the holidays.

This can be a very tough time of year for many, and residents are reminded that they are not alone. In fact, there are many resources available, including:

**Emergency:** 9-1-1

**Crisis Text Line:** Text 'REACH' to 741741

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** 988

**Veteran Crisis Line:** 988, then press 1

**Drug and Alcohol Treatment Helpline:** 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

**Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

**National Eating Disorder Helpline:** 1-800-931-2237

**LGBTQ+ Support Line (The Trevor Project):** 1-866-488-7386

There are also infinite ways to engage in self-care activities. Here are a few suggestions from NPD's social services team:

- Doing something for others, and even with others can be a very gratifying altruistic act! Try cooking a meal or baking something sweet for someone you care about.
- The holidays can bring up a lot of different emotions for many different reasons. Instead of keeping everything in, let it out with someone you trust!
- It's easy to stretch ourselves thin during the holidays. Instead of saying yes to all things, be intentional. Guard your time, make healthy choices, stick with a budget and carve out time for self-care!

[Learn more about the Naperville Police Department's clinicians](#) and the services they provide the community.