

# The Northern Lights

MINNESOTA STATE SAFETY & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Photo by Alex Saberi

Autumn Activity Issue

## Wild-Game Hunting (and Eating) Safety

Every year millions of people across the United States practice the sport of wild game hunting. Millions more eat wild game in the form of burgers, steaks, stews, and jerkies, among other preparations.

There are many diseases people can get from wild game. Most of these diseases can make people sick when they eat undercooked meat, but some can make people sick from touching blood, muscle, brain tissue, and organs of a wild game animal.

Anyone involved with hunting, preparation, or eating of wild game should be aware of diseases that can be acquired from animals and their meat. Become familiar with food safety procedures that can help prevent infection at all stages of preparation, from field dressing to cooking and storage.

It is very important to remember that not all infected animals look sick. You may feel sick soon after coming in contact with an infected animal or you could start to feel sick months later, depending upon on the type of disease. [Go to Page 4](#)

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## Safety Begins at Home!

Fall — there’s nothing like the new school year, the crisp, cool air, and the turning leaves to build excitement about the changing seasons. Many of us welcome a break from the hot, sticky weather. Regardless, Fall is also a time of lurking dangers. From carbon monoxide poisoning to fire hazards, the season can be a minefield. However, by following a few simple tips we can keep our homes and families safe and healthy during the coming months.

### Fire safety

Have a qualified technician clean and inspect your fireplace, furnace and/or central heating system annually and make necessary repairs. Remember to

open flues when using a fireplace and burn only wood. Burning trash, cardboard boxes and Christmas trees in a fireplace increases the risk of uncontrolled fires.

### Space Heaters

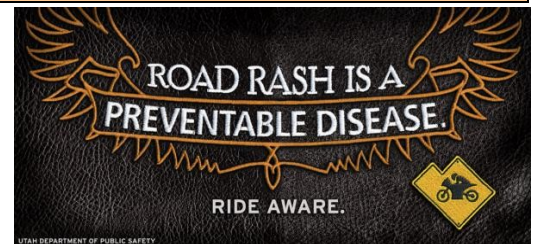
It’s important to give space heaters space. Keep the area around space heaters — at least three feet on all sides — free from other objects and debris. Unplug space heaters when not in use, and always use proper fuel in kerosene heaters.

### Home Fire Alarms

The State Safety Office suggests a two-pronged approach to reduce fire-related injuries: install and test smoke alarms on every level of your home, and then create and practice a fire escape plan for your household if the smoke alarm goes off.

A good rule of thumb is to change batteries when Daylight Savings goes in or out of use.

Other fire safety tips include: [Go to Page 3](#)



## Safety Courses Reduce Risk to All Hunters

You and your our kids can learn how to become a safe and ethical hunter from the comfort of your own home and on their own time. Study online and prepare for the instructor led range and field day where they will apply their acquired knowledge in a fast-paced hands-on setting, pass the written final exam and get your certificate. If you're born after Dec 31, 1979, you will need a Hunter's education certificate to purchase a hunting license. Topics of the online Safety Course include:

- Safe hunting practices
- Firearms and ammunition parts, maintenance, and safety
- The 10 rules of firearm safety
- Basic shooting skills
- Hunting techniques
- Basics in archery, muzzle loading and trapping
- Tree stand safety
- Survival and First Aid
- Hunting Ethics
- Minnesota-specific hunting regulations

Log onto <http://www.huntercourse.com/usa/minnesota/> to conduct your online course or to get information about hunting requirements in the state of Minnesota.

## Getting Your Vehicle Ready for Winter

Preparation is one key to successfully navigating winter roads. Winter weather can bring unexpected conditions, so make sure that your vehicle is ready for ice and snow. Prior to the winter driving season, you should have a mechanic check the brakes, battery, hoses and belts. Below are some additional tips for getting your vehicle ready for winter. While you are at it,

Check that your fluid levels are full.

Make sure your wipers don't streak. You may want to consider installing winter wiper blades.

Ensure that your heater and defroster are working properly.

Make sure all lights are working.

Check to be sure that tires are properly inflated and have sufficient tread depth. [Go to Page 3](#)

## Chain Saws; Cut Your Losses

Now that cooler weather is upon us and the temptation to relax by a warm fireplace is high, many Soldiers might think about securing their own firewood for the long winter ahead. Anyone who's ever cut wood knows how effective and efficient a chain saw can be when compared to the



backbreaking work of swinging an axe. Before you head into the woods, however, there are important safety considerations to keep in mind. Chain saws are dangerous machines. They can be purchased and operated without training or licensing, and the risk of serious injury is very real for the unaware and unprepared. According to the University of Florida, about 40,000 Americans are injured each year while operating chain saws. Injuries require an average of 110 stitches to close and four weeks of recovery time to heal.

Most incidents are caused by kickback, when the teeth on the chain catch an object and send the blade flying backward. But chain saw accidents are largely preventable, especially when users wear proper personal protective equipment and follow safe operating procedures. OSHA offers the following tips for safe chain saw operation: [Go to Page 3](#)

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## From Page 2 Getting Your Vehicle Ready for Winter...

Carry a winter emergency travel kit.

Keep your gas tank at least half full.

Slow down and increase following distance. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.

Avoid sudden stops and starts. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.

Beware of roads that may look wet, but are actually frozen, often referred to as "black ice."

Use extra caution on bridges and ramps where ice can often form without warning.

Carry a cell phone.

Do not use cruise control while driving on snow-covered roads.

Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to others Use low beams in bad weather, especially during heavy or blowing snow.

Remove ice and snow from windows, mirrors and all vehicle lights as often as needed.

Don't pass snow plows & sanding trucks. The drivers can't see you & the road in front of them is often worse than the road behind.

Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to arrive.

If you do become stranded, it's better to stay with your vehicle until help arrives. Run the engine every hour or so, but make sure the tailpipe is clear and keep the downwind window cracked open.

## Home Safety from Page 1

Clean and/or replace furnace filters on a regular basis.

Clean dryer exhaust ducts and surrounding areas regularly. Remove all lint, dust and other materials.

Check electrical outlets for potential fire hazards such as frayed wires or loose-fitting plugs. Be sure not to overload electrical outlets, fuse boxes, extension cords and other power sources. Keep a multi-purpose fire extinguisher accessible, filled and ready for operation.

### Carbon Monoxide

With heating units running at full blast, carbon monoxide poisoning is a real threat. CO is an odorless, colorless gas formed by the incomplete combustion of organic substances such as fuels. Simple measures can prevent CO poisoning. Ensure all fuel-burning appliances and heating devices are vented and maintained properly. Know the symptoms of CO poisoning and install and maintain CO alarms in your home, testing them every six months.

### Slips, trips and falls

According to the Home Safety Council, slips, trips and falls are the single-greatest hazard causing injuries and deaths at home each year. Autumn is a good time to look closely around your property and take care of maintenance problems that could cause slips in the winter months. Make sure outdoor lighting is adequate, repair porches and steps and store summer items that could trip you or your guests.

## From page 2 Chains Saws; Cut Your Losses

### Before starting a chain saw

Check controls, chain tension & all bolts and handles for functionality and are adjusted according to the factory specs.

Ensure the chain is sharp and the lubrication reservoir is full.

Start the saw on the ground or another firm, supportive surface. Never drop start a chain saw.

Start the saw at least 10 feet from the fueling area with the chain's brake engaged.

### Fueling a chain saw

Use proper containers when transporting fuel (No glass).

No flame or spark around fuel or refueling points.

Use a funnel or flexible hose when pouring fuel into the saw.

Never attempt to fuel a running or hot saw.

### Chain saw safety

Clear away all obstructions from the chain's path. Look for metal objects in and on the tree before cutting.

Shut off the saw or engage the chain brake when walking on rough or uneven terrain.

Keep your hands on the saw's handles and maintain secure footing while operating the saw.

Always wear proper hand, foot, leg, eye, face, hearing and head PPE when operating a chain saw. No loose clothing.

Watch for branches that may spring when cut.

Avoid saw kickback. Don't saw using the tip and keep the tip guard in place if the saw is equipped with one.

Never cut branches that may fall onto overhead power lines. Contact the local utility company for assistance.

**Want to find out your latest applicable Safety of Use Messages? Go to:**

**<https://tulsa.tacom.army.mil/>**

### **From Page 1 Wild Game Safety**

You can get infected when field dressing or butchering infected animal or bird. This is especially true when there is no soap and water available with which to clean up. You can get infected if blood, muscle, organs, or brain tissue of a wild animal comes in contact with your eyes, nose, mouth, or a skin cut.

Not only can you get sick from having direct contact with an infected animal's fluids or organs, but tools can also spread germs if not cleaned well. There are simple things you can do to protect yourself and your family from getting sick.

#### **Prevention: Safe Field Dressing and Butchering**

- Avoid all contact with visibly ill animals or those found dead.
- Use clean, sharp knives for field dressing and butchering.
- Wear eye protection and rubber or latex gloves (disposable or reusable) when handling carcasses.
- Avoid direct contact (bare skin) with fluid or organs from the wild game.
- Burn disposable gloves or place in a bag and throw away in the trash. Burn or bury inedible parts of the carcass after butchering.
- Wash hands as soon as possible with soap and warm water for 20 seconds or more and dry hands with a clean cloth.

**Clean all tools and reusable gloves used in field dressing and butchering with a disinfectant such as bleach (*Read the safety instructions on the label*).**

#### **Food Prep, Cooking and Food Storage**

Consumers can greatly reduce their risk of food borne illness from wild game by following these four easy steps:

**CLEAN:** *Wash hands and surfaces often*

**SEPARATE:** *Don't cross-contaminate!*

**COOK:** *Cook to proper temperature*

**CHILL:** *Refrigerate promptly*

For more information on these steps, click on the step name or visit the Keeping Food Safe section of the new **FoodSafety.gov** site.

*Marinated venison steaks get buttery and tender on the grill serve with fries or chips and a cold drink, and your meal is complete.*

#### **Ingredients:**

4 (6 to 8 ounce) venison steaks  
 1 cup buttermilk  
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
 ½ cup olive oil  
 2 tablespoons mustard  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon black pepper

#### **Directions:**

- 1) Combine steaks, buttermilk, and Worcestershire sauce in a covered bowl; refrigerate overnight or at least 8 hours. Drain.
- 2) Preheat grill to high. Combine oil, mustard, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Brush over steaks to cover. Place on grill and cook until browned on both sides, about 10 minutes total. Serve warm.

