



SAFETY DISPATCH

WINTER 2012

CITY OF
PITTSBURGH
"AMERICA'S MOST LIVABLE CITY"
LUKE RAVENSTAHL, MAYOR

CHECK IT OUT

Bugs that are brightly colored, really smelly, or poisonous-looking are potentially fatal if ingested.

On the other hand, bamboo worms, giant water bugs, mole crickets, termites and tarantula spiders are not only safe to eat, but are also low in fat and carbohydrates, and contain lots of natural proteins.

Birthday party, cheesecake, jelly bean, boom!
It's the end of the World as we know it and I feel fine.
- R.E.M.

WINTER HIGHLIGHTS

FREE FLU SHOTS available at MedExpress with your City ID
CITYFIT EVENTS, City.Fit@Pittsburghpa.gov or call 255-2383:

- **FITNESS CENTER MEMBERSHIPS**, \$25 enrollment fee waived at participating YMCAs from January 6—19, 2013
- **MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN** ongoing through the holidays—contact Frank.Manella@Pittsburghpa.gov
- **WEIGHT WATCHERS** starting January 10th—contact Claire.Mastroberardino@Pittsburghpa.gov
- **CITYFIT DANCING** proposed start in February 2013—check <http://pittsburghpa.gov/personnel/cityfit/> for updates
- **VENUTRE OUTDOORS** ongoing registration

CHARITABLE EVENTS:

BLOOD DRIVES, [December 4th](#) and [February 5th](#)—8am to 1pm
Claire.Mastroberardino@Pittsburghpa.gov



A massive meteor strike to the earth would likely kill 100% of all bacteria and germs; however, in the event the world does not end this December...

Keep it Clean

Studies have shown that hand washing is more effective at preventing illness than vaccinations. Wash hands with warm water and soap to remove bacteria lodged in the natural oils of your hands (washing with water alone will not remove these pathogens). Wash them long enough to cover all areas of the hands with soap. You should be able to sing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* in it's entirety before rinsing. According to the CDC keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands.

What's The Bottom Line?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that there are 78 million cases of food-borne illness with 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths each year. The CDC links poor hand sanitation to 34% of the documented cases of food-borne illness.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Remember Vulnerable Populations in Winter:

As temperatures decrease, many people suffer injury or worse because they lack the resources to sustain a basic quality of life. How can you help? <http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/servepgh/snowangels/>

- * Frequently check in with elderly family members and neighbors to make sure they are warm, safe and not hungry.
- * Remember your pets by assuring they have shelter from the cold and adequate food & unfrozen water.
- * Illness is more prevalent this year, so always practice good hygiene practices when shopping or interacting with the public.
- * If you have the means, please remember those less fortunate by making a contribution to the many charitable campaigns this holiday season.

Avoiding a Holiday Decoration Mishap:

- * Do not place your holiday tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. Always keep live trees well watered to avoid them drying out and becoming a fire hazard;
- * Use non-flammable decorations;
- * Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive wear before putting them up;
- * When hanging lights outside your home be extra vigilant about safety and remember that more isn't always better;
- * Never leave lit candles unattended.



Space Heater Safety:

Keep warm this winter but always be careful around space heaters to avoid injury or a fire.

- * Read the manufacturers manual before using a space heater to understand the risks of the unit;
- * Locate the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic;
- * Be especially careful to keep children and pets away from the heater;
- * Have vented space heaters professionally inspected every year to avoid dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.
- * For liquid-fueled heaters, use only the approved fuel.



Preventing Dryer Fires:

Winter weather means more wet clothes needing to be dried and since hanging them outside is not an option during this season, our clothes dryers will be busy. Nearly 3,000 clothes dryer fires are reported every year. To assure safe operation, follow these guidelines:

- * Regularly clean lint from traps, vents and other areas of the dryer, as they are easily ignited;
- * Follow building codes requiring dryers to be exhausted directly outdoors;
- * Have the dryer installed and maintained by a qualified professional;
- * Do not dry items containing foam, rubber or plastic (such as a bath mat), or that have come into contact with anything flammable (such as alcohol or gasoline or a family member that may be filled with both alcohol and gas);
- * Do not place overheated space heaters or burning holiday trees near or inside your dryer.

December 21, 2012 marks the end of the Mayan long count calendar. Some predict this as the end of the world, while others see it as merely the end of an era and the renewal of hope. Personnel & Civil Service sides with NASA who believes we'll be around for a good deal longer. So, check your brakes and tires, wear a seat belt, look before you cross, lift with your legs, and take small bites. Make the moments last by thinking Safety First. Have a happy and safe Holiday Season.