

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Holiday Health

Christmas break!!! A great perk of working at this university. A few weeks of time off to spend with family, go hunting, or just escape from the day-to-day routine.

Here are few safety tips to keep in mind so you can start back 2019 in good shape for a new year.

## Decorations:

- Keep decorations away from heaters and fireplaces.
- Avoid using real candles around fresh greenery; replace with battery look-like candles instead.
- Keep live trees watered.
- Don't use electric lights on a metal tree.
- Plug outdoor lights into a GFCI receptacle or a portable GFCI adapter, available at most hardware stores.
- Unplug all decorative lights before leaving the house or going to bed.

## Food and Drinks:

- Slice & bake cookies ... like eating the dough straight out of the tube? Don't do it. According to FDA, "Eating these kinds of foods right out of the package, without cooking them, could make you sick from bacteria. Cooking them according to the package directions before you eat them kills bacteria that could make you sick."
- Keep raw meat away from raw vegetables and other foods to be cooked. Don't use the same cutting board and utensils for different uncooked foods without first washing it thoroughly between food types.
- If a little alcohol helps keep the gatherings merry, be sure to have a plan beforehand for a designated driver.

## Hunting Safety:

- Always wear your orange, even on private land.
- Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
- Wear a safety harness, also known as a fall arrest system, when you are in a treestand, as well as when climbing into or out of a treestand.
- Use a Haul Line to pull up your gear and unloaded firearm or bow to your treestand. Never climb with anything in your hands or on your back. Before descending, lower your equipment on the opposite side of the tree.
- Before shooting, clearly identify your target and what is beyond.

## Safety Tips for Non-Hunters Near a Hunting Area:

- Wear the right clothing. Avoid colors and patterns that blend into your surroundings, including whites, blacks, browns, earth tones, animal patterns and camouflage. Bright orange, red or green clothing is best—especially for vests and hats.
- Make some noise. This includes talking loudly (to yourself or a companion), whistling or singing—especially if you hear a shot nearby. Once hunters have acknowledged your location, show courtesy by reducing excessive noise that might scare away animals.
- Keep pets safe, too. Don't let dogs off-leash in an area that allows hunting—especially if they like to chase deer.

## Any Outdoor Activity:

- Alert someone of your plans. Never head out without letting a friend or relative know where you'll be and when you expect to return.
- Plan for the weather. Anyone can be at risk for hypothermia in cold, wet conditions, but also in temperatures as high as 50 degrees. Dress in warm layers, avoiding moisture-retaining cotton and remembering a water-repelling outer layer.

For more info contact – Leslie Woolington

**MAFES /MSU-EXTENSION**

**Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control**

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Sources:

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