



# IMCOM *Safety* Gram



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## Autumn Safety

Autumn brings one of the most beautiful times of the year with colorful leaves and pumpkins littering the ground. The season also brings up safety issues for the entire family. Nature presents beautiful displays in the form of fall leaves that welcome hikers and outdoor adventurers outdoors. Maintenance tasks also need attention during fall. Prepare for the changing weather of the fall to ensure that your family is both happy and healthy the whole season long.

### *Some helpful autumn safety practices:*

- ◆ **Driving Safety.** Fall driving safety keeps you and passengers safe. Leaves on roadways might become slick, especially after rain. Use caution when driving and braking on leaf-covered roads. The bright sun glaring into your windshield makes it difficult to see during fall driving. Wear sunglasses to minimize the glare and slow down if you cannot see well. You might also face frost or dew on the vehicle windows and roadways on fall mornings.
- ◆ **Weather Safety.** Summer often comes to mind when you think of sunscreen, but you should also apply it during fall to protect your skin from the sun. When hiking or camping, be aware of quickly-changing weather conditions, especially during late fall. Mountain hiking can be particularly dangerous because of the potential for colder temperatures, ice and snow as you get higher. Bring along plenty of warm clothing and blankets on a camping trip.
- ◆ **Home Safety.** Gutter-cleaning and other outdoor home maintenance projects present the risk of falls. Secure your ladder before removing debris from your gutters or handling other repairs on or near your roof. Tools should be in proper working order and put away as soon as you are finished to prevent injuries. Some homeowners burn leaves or have bonfires in the backyard during the fall months. Avoid burning on windy, dry days. A water source nearby helps prevent the fire from spreading if it goes outside of the burning area. Children need to understand the basics of fire safety if they are outdoors during this time.
- ◆ **Child Safety.** A pile full of leaves gives kids a way to enjoy fall, but the leaves also present a safety concern. Piling leaves on the street invites children to play near traffic, leaving them at risk for getting hit by cars. A driver might not realize a child is present if she is buried in a pile of leaves on the street. Keep leaves in the yard and put rakes away when you are finished to prevent child injuries.
- ◆ **Nature Safety.** Fall nature experiences also present dangers, especially in areas where hunting is allowed. Hiking outdoors near hunting grounds leaves you at risk for being mistaken for an animal. Brightly colored clothing helps hunters distinguish you from animals. Calling out to hunters to identify your location or simply avoiding areas that allow hunting also keep you safe.
- ◆ **Heating Safety.** Mid-fall is the start of the carbon monoxide (CO) season. This is when we start firing up furnaces, wood burners, space heaters and the like. And when we button up our homes, shops and garages to keep out drafts, we also seal in carbon monoxide, a silent and odorless killer. To reduce the risk of CO poisoning in your home or shop, conduct a pre-winter inspection of common CO sources, such as furnaces, fireplaces, and gas-fired appliances.



***Following autumn safety practices gives you piece of mind that you are taking the proper precautions to keep you safe as you enjoy this special time of year.***