

## Re: Press Release—Holiday Safety

The New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center (NMPDIC) would like to wish New Mexico a safe and happy holiday season. The Center recommends the following tips to protect our family, friends and neighbors from a potential poisoning:

### Food Preparation and Alcohol

- Wash hands well with warm water and soap before and after food preparation, especially raw meat/eggs
- Wash utensils, containers, counter tops and cutting boards well before and after food preparation.
- Use separate cutting boards for meat products.
- Cook all meats to the recommended internal temperature.
- Refrigerate all perishable items no more than two hours after a meal.
- Avoid storing raw meat above prepared food as contaminated fluid may drip or seep.
- Keep all alcoholic beverages out of the reach of children and beware of unfinished alcoholic beverages—as little as 3 oz. of hard liquor can be fatal to a child weighing 25 pounds.

### Holiday Decorations

- Angel Hair is made up of spun glass which can severely irritate the eyes and mouth, causing a lot of pain.
- Snow spray can cause severe damage if sprayed directly into eye.
- Do not ingest the liquid in snow globes as harmful bacteria can accumulate.
- Keep all substances containing hydrocarbons, such as oil candle lamps, out of the reach of children; these products are extremely dangerous and can cause severe respiratory problems or may lead to death.
- Beware of fireplace powders and logs that burn different colors as they contain heavy metals—symptoms include severe stomach pain and intestinal irritation.
- Store batteries out of sight and reach of children; tape battery compartments for extra precaution.

### Toxic Holiday Plants

- It may be worth keeping toxic plants out of your home if you have small children or pets. At the very least, keep toxic plants out the reach of children and pets.
- Although the effects of ingesting toxic holiday plants range in severity, the most common symptoms include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. The following holiday plants are considered toxic: mistletoe, azalea, rhododendron, amaryllis, Christmas berry, holly, winter broom, Jerusalem cherry, chrysanthemum and Christmas peppers.
- Beware of the essential oils in evergreens, such as balsams, cedar, fir, juniper and pine as they can cause stomach irritation if ingested and damage to the lung if inhaled as an aromatic fragrance.

### Medications

- During flu and cold season, our homes may be heavily stocked with remedies; take extra care to ensure that all medications are kept in their original containers and out of the reach of children.
- Follow directions carefully and do not exceed recommended dosage.
- Remember that the holiday season is usually a time when family and friends visit your home; make sure that visitors also keep their medications out of the reach of children.

**Call NMPDIC at 1-800-222-1222 for any questions or poison emergencies.**