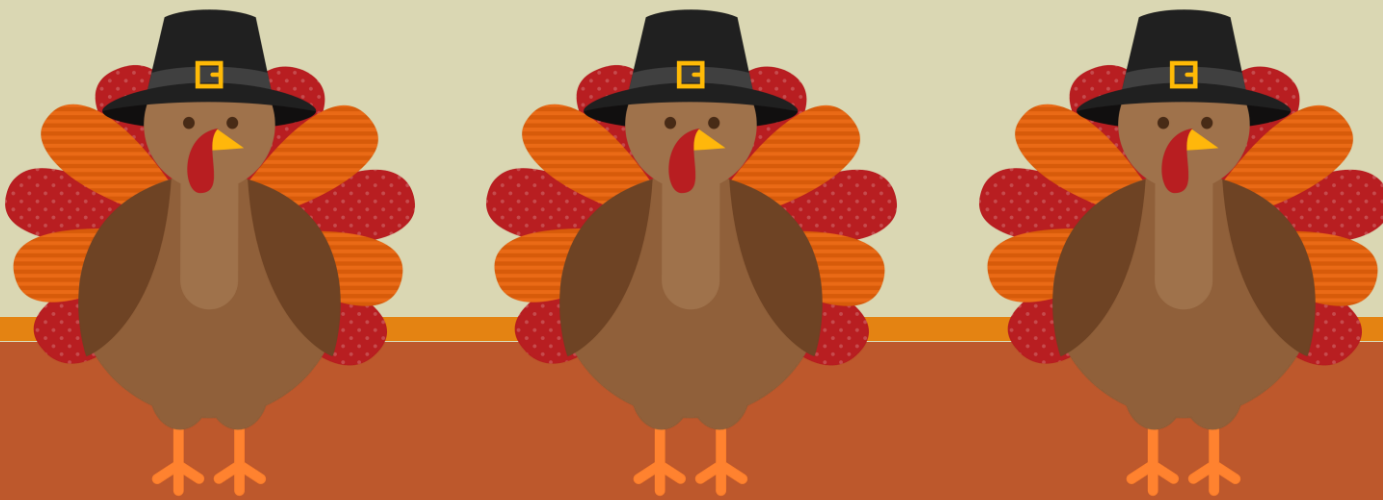




**EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER**  
**ISSUE 10**  
**NOVEMBER 2019**



# Upcoming Events

## November



Nov 01- 08

### School Supply Drive

Bins throughout Campus

Nov 01

### NAFECO Uniforms

Operators' Lounge 7:00AM – 11:00AM

Nov 01

### Triple A

Operators' Lounge 11:00AM – 2:00PM

Nov 13

### Great American Teach In

Multiple Locations

Nov 18

### NAFECO Uniforms

Operators' Lounge 1:00PM – 4:00PM

Nov 20

### Massages

Admin Break Room 2nd FL 8:30AM – 11:00AM

Operators' Lounge 11:30AM – 2:00PM

Nov 19

### Healthy Eating for Diabetes Snack N Learn

Auditorium – Admin Building NOON – 1:00PM

Nov 6, 13,  
20 & 27

### Walk with Benefits Wednesdays

One Lap around Pond at

9:45AM & 2:30PM

Meet in Admin Lobby

\*Pace will be Leisurely.

Nov 18 - 27

### FSA Open Enrollment

\*More info posted on

separate posters



If you would like to meet with any of the representatives individually or in a different location, please contact Liz O'Hara ext 1856.

WE ARE THANKFUL  
FOR YOU



## PSTA's GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We operate with honest and transparent **communication**.

We invite robust debate and **listen** to each other's ideas.

We take personal responsibility to design **customer-focused** solutions and own the results.

We **innovate** and drive **reliability, quality, and efficiency**.

We actively engage in **professional development** and take initiative.





# GOOD SAMARITAN PASSENGERS OF THE ROUTE 11 GO THE EXTRA MILE

*Submitted by Jeff Thompson, Director of Transportation, Barbara Irizarry, Bus Operator, and Maryanne Sobocinski, Planning Assistant*



**Barbara Irizarry**, a PSTA bus operator, had concern for the welfare of Herb, an elderly customer who needed assistance. Barbara's efforts led to a complete transformation of the Herb's life with the assistance of Judy and Hopeton our "Route 11 Good Samaritan" passengers who went the extra mile to make a difference.

They volunteered their time to help Herb clean and declutter his apartment. Their act of compassion and kindness did not go unnoticed. Jeff Thompson, Director of Transportation and Barbara told the story and honored Judy and Hopeton at the November Transit Riders Advisory Committee meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Their act of compassion earned a standing ovation, and a special gift bag from PSTA.



# PSTA participated in the GREAT AMERICAN TEACH-IN!

*Submitted by Nicole Dufva, Public Engagement Planner*

PSTA staff:

- Educated over 1500 students about the benefits of public transit
- Increased recognition about PSTA and our services
- Promoted a positive image of PSTA and public transportation
- Highlighted career and job opportunities at PSTA and in the public transportation sector





# Veterans Day

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

**PSTA'S VETERANS EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP  
HOSTED AN APPRECIATION BREAKFAST!**







# WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF!



**Courtney Grigsby**  
Digital Marketing  
Coordinator

Courtney will be working on all digital communications and marketing efforts which include social media, e-newsletters, website content and more. Courtney obtained her B.S. in Public Relations from the University of Florida as well as her Master's in Strategic Communication and Innovation from Texas Tech University. Most recently, Courtney was working as a Marketing Intern for B2 Communications in St. Petersburg. We are excited to have her help in creating a more strategic social media communications plan and growing our engagement with our community!

Stephanie will be assisting us with strategic communications including media inquiries and events, tactful talking points for PSTA projects, and overall thoughtful messaging for our agency. Stephanie obtained her B.A. in Journalism & New Media with a Concentration in Broadcast at the California Baptist University where she played basketball. Most recently, Stephanie was an Anchor/Reporter for WTXL in Tallahassee where she was responsible for the production of news stories from start to finish from writing, filming and editing for TV as well as developing and publishing online news articles. We are looking forward to all of the positive press she's going to achieve for PSTA!



**Stephanie Rank**  
Public Relations Coordinator

It's a BEAUTIFUL time of the year for a walk

Join us on Wednesdays for a

**Morning walk at 9:45 a.m.**  
**Afternoon walk at 2:30 p.m.**

Meet in Admin Lobby to do one lap around the lake with your benefits team.

November dates:  
6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

December dates:  
4th, 11th, 18th



Pace will be leisurely



## 1<sup>st</sup> Walking Wednesday

Join in on the fun next week...

## NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

**9.3%** Americans suffer from diabetes

At the current rate, **one** in three

**American adults**

will have diabetes in **2050**





# GREAT AMERICAN SMOKE OUT

*Submitted by Liz O'Hara, Benefits Manager*

Have you thought about quitting? Do you want a loved one to try quitting? We're talking about smoking....

The Great American Smoke Out, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Tobacco Free Florida encourages tobacco users to make-a-plan to quit smoking on Thurs, Nov 21<sup>st</sup>.

The Great American Smoke Out raises awareness about the dangers of smoking and the many effective resources available to help smokers successfully quit.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Florida and the U.S.

On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers. For every person who dies, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness. About 30 percent of cancer deaths in Florida are caused by cigarette smoking.

Smoking not only affects one's health, it also impacts individuals financially. A pack-a-day smoker in Florida can spend more than \$2,100 in just one year and more than \$10,500 in five years.

Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way program makes it easier than ever for tobacco users to access free tools and services to help them quit. More than 159,000 Floridians have successfully quit tobacco using one of these free services.

For more information, please visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway).

Smokers can also access Tobacco Free Florida's online Cost Calculator to find out how much money they could save by quitting at [tobaccofreeflorida.com/calculator](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/calculator).

**Tobacco remains the number one preventable cause of death, disability and disease!**

AN EMPOWERING DAY OF TRAINING

# LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

## *Skills for Women*



On Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>, this dynamic group of PSTA transportation leaders discovered fresh ideas and new techniques to influence, motivate, and mentor others!

**PSTA Attendees** (L to R): Cheri-Lynn Giruzzi, Tauhiyyah Beckley, Emma DeJesus, Tamika White, Sherry Schiavone, Larkesha Burr, Gabrielle Donaldson, Yolanda Shields-Cash, Annie Cheevers

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING UPCOMING CLASSES

Submitted by Adriana Rodriguez, Risk Management



THE RISK DEPARTMENT, IN COLLABORATION WITH EDUCATION, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT, ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE AN EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority  
Against Human Trafficking

**WE ARE  
«THE EYES  
OF THE CITY»**  
See Something, Say Something

**SIGN UP TODAY!**

**Human trafficking** is something we don't always think about in the context of transportation issues. We may not think that human trafficking is happening around us but it is the truth! It's happening in cities and small communities across America. It is a Global problem.

Our educational campaign has been designed to create Awareness. Knowing what to look for and how to respond is essential with the appropriate employee training. We are a very important part of this fight against crime. Our participation will be an important piece of the transportation industry effort to stop the flow of Human trafficking as well as making sure PSTA continues providing quality of service.

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Saturday October 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2019<br>10:am-12:00pm | Saturday November 09 <sup>th</sup> , 2019<br>10:am-12:00pm | Saturday December 07 <sup>th</sup> , 2019<br>10:am-12:00pm |
| Thursday October 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2019<br>3:30pm-4:30pm | Thursday November 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2019<br>3:30pm-4:30pm | Thursday December 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2019<br>3:30pm-4:30pm |

Please see the Safety, Security, & Training (SS&T) Bulletin Board for sign-ups.

**"OUR LIVES  
BEGIN TO END  
THE DAY WE BECOME  
SILENT ABOUT THINGS  
THAT MATTER."**  
- DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

For more information, contact:  
Addy Rodriguez, M.A. B.A., ACA  
Risk Coordinator  
EXT. 1889 | ARodriguez@psta.net



Join us!!!



**Saturday, Dec. 7, 10am-12pm**  
**Thursday, Dec. 19, 3:30-4:30pm**

**SEE SS&T BULLETIN BOARD FOR SIGN-UPS!!!**

# Thank you for all your generous donations!

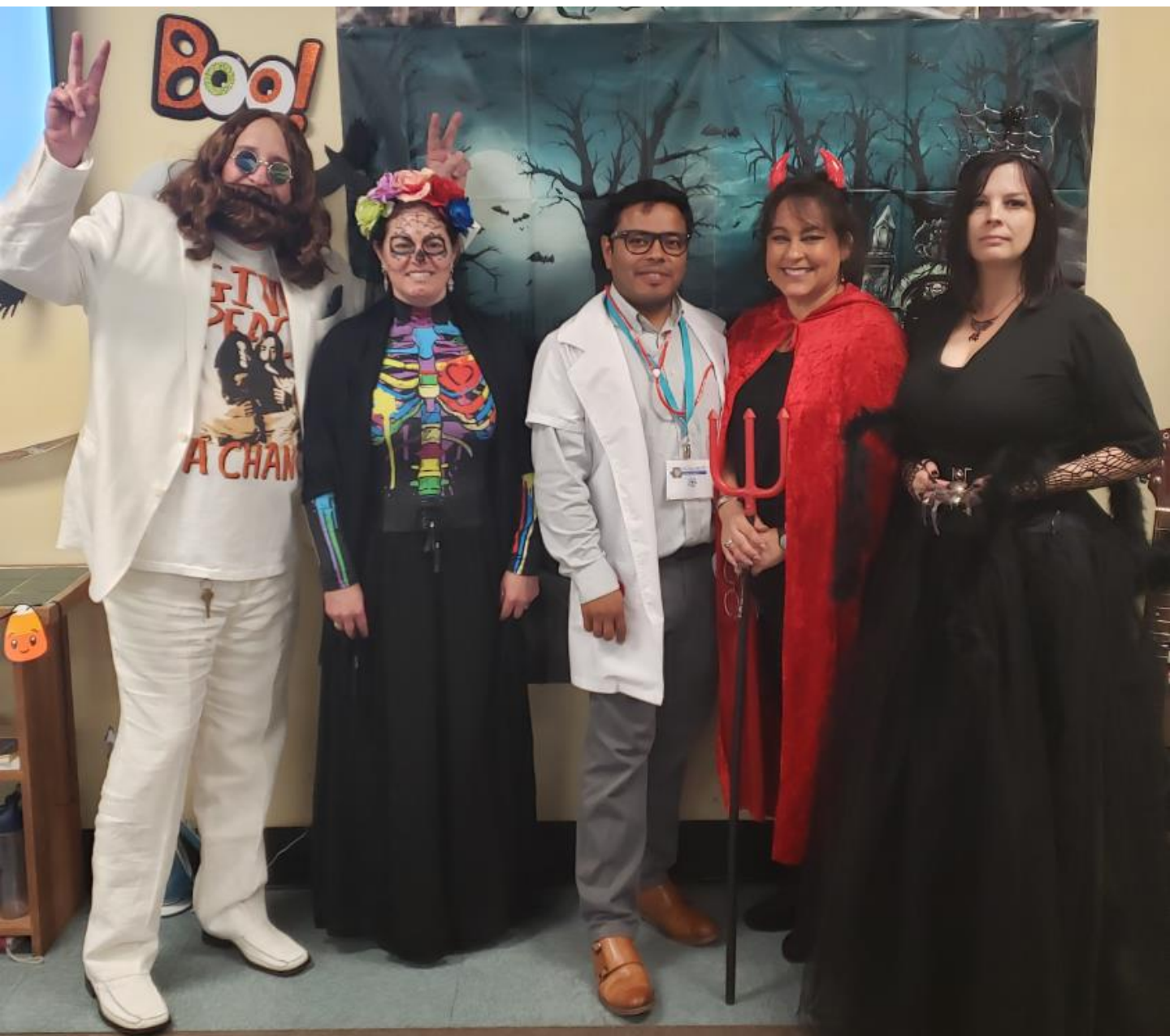
We donated \$719 to the American Cancer Society in the month of October



You are all awesome!

*Submitted by Liz O'Hara, Benefits Manager*

## A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL AT THE PSTA HALLOWEEN PARTY!







**CONGRATS TO THE CONTEST WINNERS!**

**Most Original: Mia Kabigting**

**Funniest: Pam Reitz**

**Scariest: Angeli Baker**





**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE!**

Melissa Black, Pedro Galvez, Rachael Cappolla, Juan Luvian, and Eileen Morales

TO ALL THOSE BORN IN  
NOVEMBER

*Happy Birthday*

HAVE A SAFE & HAPPY THANKSGIVING





- November is the 11th month of the year and has 30 days.
- **Season** (Northern Hemisphere): Autumn
- **Holidays:**
  - Veterans Day
  - World Diabetes Day
  - Thanksgiving
  - American Indian Heritage Month
  - Good Nutrition Month
  - Aviation Month
  - American Diabetes Awareness Month
  - National Stamp Collecting Month
  - National Peanut Butter Lover's Month
- **Symbols of November:**
  - Birthstone: Topaz and citrine
  - Flower: Chrysanthemum
  - Zodiac signs: Scorpio and Sagittarius
- **History:**

In the original Roman calendar, November was the ninth month of the year. It got its name from the Latin word "novem" which means nine. However, it became the eleventh month when the Romans added in January and February to the start of the year. Throughout much of history, November has often been thought of as a somber month because it signaled the start of winter. People would spend the month storing up their harvest and preparing their food and homes in order to survive the winter.
- **Fun Facts about November:**
  - It is the last month of the Fall season.
  - November in the Northern Hemisphere is similar to May in the Southern Hemisphere.
  - Elections are held in the United States on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
  - The third Thursday of November is the Great American Smokeout. Smokers are encouraged by the American Cancer Society to stop smoking on this day.
  - American football is the main sport watched in the United States during this month.
  - Most, if not all, of the leaves have fallen off the trees by the end of November.



## **NEXT MOBILE FOOD PANTRY WILL TAKE PLACE AT PSTA HEADQUARTERS ON DEC. 3<sup>RD</sup>!**

Though many of us will have food in excess on Thanksgiving, there are plenty of people in Tampa Bay who don't have access to fresh, healthy meals. Food deserts are identified areas where residents don't have a grocery store close by, or where many don't have a car to drive and buy groceries.

PSTA and Feeding Tampa Bay launched their first Mobile Food Pantry back in July to help feed those in food deserts and who need a hand up. This month, the program will continue to bring FREE, fresh food to our bus riders.

If you're interested in volunteering or for additional info, please contact Mia Kabigting at [mkabigting@psta.net](mailto:mkabigting@psta.net) or 727-540-1843.



Let's spread some **CHRISTMAS MAGIC** to the kids in our community!

# TOY DRIVE



PSTA is partnering with the Pinellas Park Firefighters Benevolent Assoc. to collect toys for the underprivileged youth in our county.

**Please bring in new, unwrapped toys and place your donations in the breakroom boxes by Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>!**

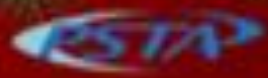
**Thank You.**





Join us for the annual

# Holiday Breakfast



Thursday, December 19th

4 A.M. to 9 A.M.      Operators' Lounge

# Save *the* Date





# Holiday Safety Tips

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Council (CPSC), approximately 12,500 individuals are treated every year in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to holiday decorating, which is why safety should be top priority when decorating for the holiday season.

Here are some important safety tips to keep in mind in preparation of the holiday season...

## **Lights & Extension Cords:**

- Only use lights (indoor & outdoor) that have been tested and rated by an independent testing laboratory (UL) and have a fused plug.
- Never use lights rated for indoor use only for outdoor use.
- Always perform an inspection of lights for damage, such as cracked sockets, frayed/bare wires, loose connections, and missing bulbs prior to using for decorating purposes. Discard any lights that have wires, sockets, or plugs that are damaged.
- Securely string or apply outdoor lights to items being decorated utilizing fastening devices and application techniques that will assist in preventing damage to wires, sockets, and plugs during inclement weather conditions, such as wind.
- Only use extension cords that have been tested and rated by an independent testing laboratory (UL).
- It is highly recommended that only extension cords rated for outdoor use be utilized when decorating outdoors. To keep light and extension cord connections dry apply weather resistant connection covers.
- Do not apply more than three standard-size light strings/sets to a single power outlet.
- Never leave lights on while away and always unplug lights prior to retiring for the evening.
- Take special precaution when applying or handling outdoor lights in humid and/or wet conditions, such as rain, sleet, or snow.
- Only use outdoor GFCI protected electrical outlets or portable GFCI power control devices and/or connectors rated for outdoor use to power outdoor lights and/or decorations in order to avoid potential electrocution hazards.

*Submitted by Diane Randall, Director of Risk Management*

# HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS CONTINUED

## Trees:

- Only buy or use artificial trees that are rated as fire resistant.

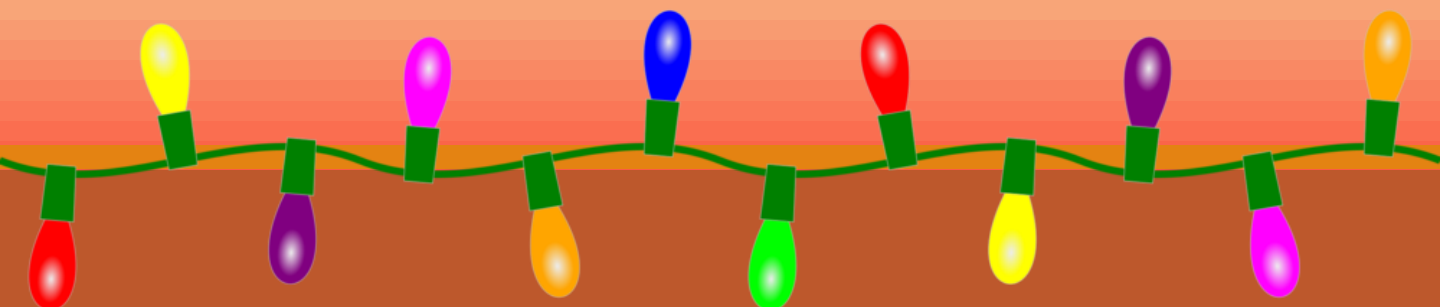
When purchasing or acquiring a live tree, please remember that the fresher the tree is kept, the longer it will stay green and be less of a fire hazard. When looking for a tree, remember the following:

- A fresh tree is always green.
- A fresh tree's needles are hard to pull from the branches.
- When a fresh tree's needles are bent between the fingers they will bend and not break.
- The fresh cut trunk of a fir tree is usually sticky with sap. Fir tree Sap can be potentially flammable, so avoid getting on decorations and clothing.
- A tree with brown needles may indicate that the tree is too dried out.
- When a fresh tree's trunk base is bounced on the ground the green needles of the tree should stay in place and not fall off. If green needles fall off it could be indication that tree is too dried out.
- Always inspect live trees for other potential hazards that may be present, such as insects, reptiles, and/or animals that may be residing within the tree.

When placing a live tree indoors always remember the following:

- Evenly cut off approximately two inches of tree trunk to promote better water absorption, and trim away any lower branches as needed in order to securely mount tree on a tree stand.
- Trim long branches (if desired) after mounting on tree stand and just prior to placing indoors.
- Place tree away from potential fire hazards, such as fireplaces, radiators or other heat sources.
- Place tree in area that is clear of traffic. Do not place tree in doorway or walkways.
- Inspect the tree daily for freshness and water level of tree stand; add additional water as needed.

happy  
HOLIDAYS





# HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS CONTINUED

## Ladders:

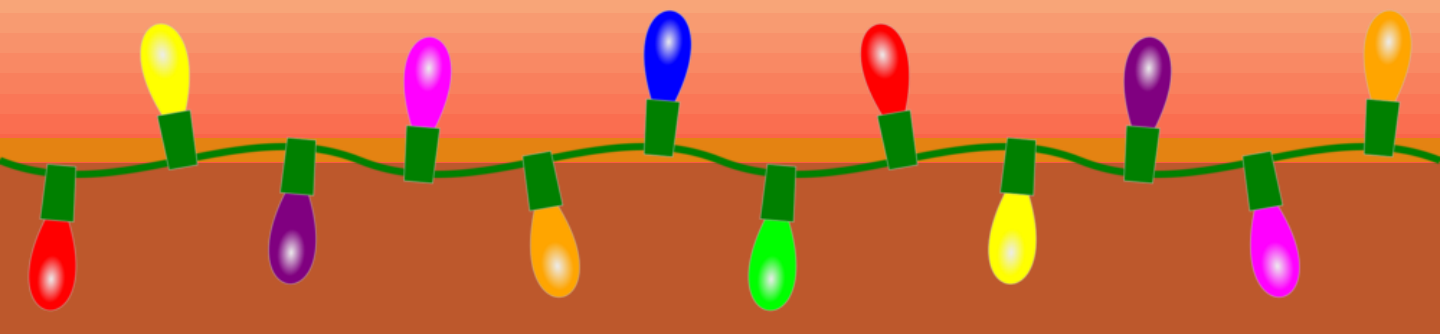
- Always utilize proper equipment, such as a step ladder, ladder, or mechanical lift when decorating at elevated heights. Avoid using chairs, counters, shelves and/or building ledges to stand upon while decorating.
- Prior to utilizing any type of ladder a survey should be performed of the area that the ladder is to be used for surface stability, power line locations, and any other hazards that may make conditions unsafe for ladder use.
- If outdoors, keep ladders at least 10' from all power lines.
- When utilizing a ladder, remember to use on even ground only.
- When setting up an extension ladder make sure to use the 4-to-1 rule: for each 4' of distance between the ground and upper point of support contact, such as wall or roof, move base of the ladder out 1'.
- Prior to climbing on any type of ladder make sure that all locks are engaged.
- Always face a ladder when climbing it.
- When using a ladder wear slip-resistant shoes and make sure that ladder rungs/ steps are free of moisture prior to climbing.
- Avoid standing on the top two rungs/steps when using a ladder. If using an extension ladder, avoid standing on the top four rungs/steps. Keep your body centered when using any ladder and avoid over-reaching.
- Higher elevations can be dangerous, so remember to use good judgment. If the decorating task seems too risky to be completed safely then it is highly recommended to seek a professional decorator to complete the task.

## Decorations & Trimmings:

- Use only decorations/trimmings made of non-combustible or flame resistant materials.
- If making own decorations out of paper or other materials, be sure to use paper products and/or materials that are non-combustible or flame resistant.

The following precautions should be observed in homes with pets and/or small children:

- Avoid placing breakable decorations, such as glass tree ornaments, where pets and/or small children may reach them.
- Avoid using angel hair and/or artificial icicles as a decorating material.
- Avoid using any type of food, such as popcorn, as a decorating material.
- Avoid using decorations or ornaments that resemble real food, such as cookies, cupcakes and candy to avoid potential choking hazard to pets and/or small children.



# HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS CONTINUED

## Candles:

- Never use real candles for decorative purposes. As a safer alternative use flameless electronic candles instead.

## Fireplaces:

- Prior to lighting any fire, make sure that all combustible materials and/or decorations are clear of fireplace area. Make sure that flue or vent is open.
- Always use a fireplace screen, cover or door when a fire is burning in a fireplace.
- Avoid using fire salts to produce colored flames in a fireplace. Fire salts contain heavy metals that could potentially be harmful if accidentally inhaled or ingested.
- Avoid burning wrapping paper, bows, and other packaging materials in a fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings may ignite suddenly and burn intensely.
- Avoid burning evergreens in a fireplace. Dry evergreens can possibly cause intense flare ups that could eject sparks or embers out of the fireplace, or up the chimney resulting in the igniting of creosote deposits.
- Use extra caution when performing fireplace duties, such as placing extra logs on the fire.

## Wrapping & Package Materials:

- Place all wrapping paper, bows, ribbon and other packaging materials in a large trash bag as gifts/presents are being opened in order to keep clutter to a minimum, avoid potential slip and fall hazards, and minimize potential fire hazards.
- Immediately discard commercial staples, wire ties and plastic securing devices as items are being unpacked for assembly and/or set-up.
- Immediately discard any plastic bags utilized to package small parts upon parts being utilized per assembly and/or set-up of items.
- Upon clean up of larger debris make final sweep of floor area for items such as screws, nuts, washers, wire ties, box staples and other items that may present a potential choking hazard to pets and/or small children.

## Stay Safe for the Holidays



# HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS CONTINUED

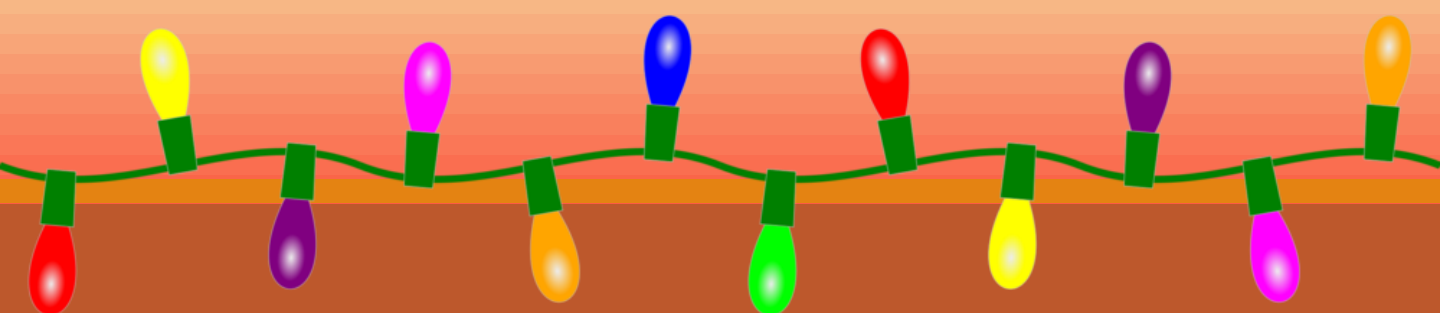
## General Safety:

- Use extra caution during the holidays when children are present. Keep matches, lighters, and sharp objects, such as scissors out of reach of children.
- Have an emergency action plan in place in case a fire breaks out.
- Make sure that adequate light is available when decorating and avoid outdoor decorating at night.
- When using spray snow to decorate, please be sure to read all manufacturer directions and hazards associated with use that are printed on can and only use as directed.



*Preferred*  
PGIT GOVERNMENTAL  
INSURANCE TRUST

would like to wish you and your  
family a safe Holiday Season...



*Call for Newsletter Submissions...*



*Please send us your stories!!!*

- Cool ideas for the newsletter? Please contact Tamika White, 540-1850 or [twhite@psta.net](mailto:twhite@psta.net).
- Newsletter Committee members include: Juan Luvian, Nicole Dufva, and Shelbie Harris.

