



# An Ounce of prevention...

Texas J-RAC Prevention and Education Committee Newsletter

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The Texas "J" Regional Advisory Council shall encourage and support the development of a comprehensive continuum of quality health care to be provided for all patients in Trauma Service Area "J". The Prevention & Education Committee shall encourage and support J-RAC participants endeavors to fully develop and implement the region wide trauma system in order to reduce the number of trauma incidents, preventable deaths, and reduce the severity of trauma-related disability, and to ensure that all trauma victims receive the best care possible.

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## Resolve to increase your fire safety knowledge

What's your New Year's resolution? This year, try doing something that will increase the protection of you and those around you: increasing fire safety knowledge and action. Try these tips in order to better ensure your safety against fires.

- Review your plan of action in case of a fire at your home, place of work, etc. Make sure that everyone knows which exit path to use given the room that they are in, and other details such as where to meet out side the building. Make sure that it is a safe distance away from the building in case of an explosion.
- Make sure that all smoke detectors and fire alarms are in proper working condition.
- Mark your calendar for [Fire Prevention Week](#) this year: October 7–13.
- Cooking is the leading cause of fires within homes. Set reminders to clean your oven, stovetop, etc. Make it a point to never leave the kitchen while cooking.
- If you are a smoker, make it a New Year's resolution to [quit smoking!](#) Smoking is the leading cause of home fire deaths in the United States.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Always look under cushions and in trashcans for burning cigarettes before going to bed.
- Check carpeting where ashtrays have been used.
- If you have not already done so, mount a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, garage and workshop.
- Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.
- If you are considering building a new home or renovating an existing home, tell your contractor that you want residential fire sprinklers installed. Sprinklers are the most effective way of protecting your family from fire because they will allow you the time needed to escape.



For more tips and ways to avoid fire hazards, please visit: <http://fire-extinguisher101.com/hazards.html>.

Source: <http://www.abcofire.com/2012/01/years-resolution-resolve-safer/>

Source: [http://www.urbandale.org/document\\_library/fire/hottopics/2013NASFMResolutions.pdf](http://www.urbandale.org/document_library/fire/hottopics/2013NASFMResolutions.pdf)

## Keep Your Safety Resolutions

You have most likely made worthwhile New Year's resolutions like losing weight, quitting smoking or spending more time with loved ones. These aren't just great goals; they also fit the [S.M.A.R.T](#) criteria that most experts suggest make for workable resolutions. They're **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-bound

### The New Year's Resolution Conundrum

The best thing you can do is resolve to put your health and safety first. Most of us get overwhelmed by the sheer effort involved in achieving our New Year's resolutions. In fact, New Year's resolutions can actually add to our stress, especially if we set unreasonable goals or are unable to accept the small slips along the way that everybody is bound to make.

### Framing Workable Resolutions

That's why some experts dislike the traditional New Year's resolution and recommend that we instead focus on building upon the positive things in our life. Other recommendations include:

- Focus on improvement, not perfection.
- Keep their aspirations positive, realistic and achievable.
- Remember that New Year's resolutions needn't be an entirely private affair. On the contrary, sharing your resolutions improves the odds of achieving them.

Sit down with your family and decide that this resolution is one that you all share - that the health and safety culture in your own household will be your collective goal, value and priority.

### The Role of Health and Safety

Resolving to put health and safety first is a way to make all other resolutions achievable. The objective of such a resolution is to be self-motivated and to behave safely, even when no one else is looking. The resolution has effects that go beyond just yourself. Resolving to put health and safety first creates a safe zone around yourself, your children, your co-workers, friends, neighbors and strangers. It's a resolution that benefits whatever corner of the world you're in at the moment. But resolving to put health and safety first might seem abstract and cliché. What exactly does it mean?

### Putting health and safety first means:

1. Considering the health and safety implications of behavioral decisions. For example:
  - If I stay up late tonight, will I get enough sleep to work safely tomorrow?
  - Have I packed an emergency kit for our camping trip?
2. Assessing the hazards associated with all activities - at work, play or home. For example:
  - Have I read the manual for this power tool?
  - What are the hazards involved in this hobby and how can I reduce the risks?
3. Educating yourself so that you can continue to add to your knowledge of health and safety practices. For example:
  - Joining the Health and Safety Committee.
  - Taking a first aid course.
4. Communicating about health and safety with your co-workers, family and community. For example:
  - Reporting near misses at work and encouraging your children to report near misses at home.
  - Involving the family in the creation of a family emergency plan.
5. Lead by example to demonstrate your personal commitment to the value of health and safety practices. For example:
  - Wearing all necessary personal protective equipment - at home, work and play.
  - Not taking shortcuts.

### Conclusion

To achieve New Year's resolutions requires strong internal motivation. And what could possibly be better motivation than improving the health and safety of yourself and your loved ones, and having a positive influence on the health and safety of everyone else around you?

Source: <http://www.safetyxchange.org/health-safety/help-your-workers-keep-their-safety-resolutions>

## Resolve to Drive Safely

It's a brand new year. Did you resolve to be healthier at the start of the New Year? Perhaps your goal is to improve yourself in some way or to put aside bad habits that you may have picked up in the last year. Add one more resolution to your list - resolve to drive safe.

### What you can do

The best part of resolving to drive safe is that it benefits you and everyone around you. Remember that each time you get in a car, you have a choice:

- **To Buckle Up.** Wearing a seat belt allows the driver and passengers in a vehicle to stay in the safest place in the event of a crash - their seat.
- **To Not Drive Distracted.** Choose to pre-set your radio station, GPS, and vehicle controls. Put down the cell phone. Wait until you are safely parked to make phone calls, surf the internet, and answer text messages.
- **To Drive Calmly.** Avoid rushing. Stop when indicated. Follow the posted speed limits. And always show courtesy to other drivers by yielding properly and using your signals.
- **To Drive Sober.** It is never ok to drive impaired by alcohol or drugs. Including prescription medication. If you are unsure if it is safe to drive with a prescription that you are taking, check with your doctor or pharmacist.

### Drive Safe. Arrive Alive

Source: [http://ohs.delaware.gov/pdfs/newsletters/corpoutreach/articles/2014/NA\\_Jan\\_2014\\_ResolveToDriveSafe.pdf](http://ohs.delaware.gov/pdfs/newsletters/corpoutreach/articles/2014/NA_Jan_2014_ResolveToDriveSafe.pdf)

## Re-thinking your New Year's dieting resolutions

For many people, the new year means a new diet in hopes of achieving a [healthy weight](#). January 1 could be renamed Diet Day given how many people wake up thinking about which foods they "can" and "can't" eat. While some [diet strategies](#) can be effective, The [Healthy Eating Plate](#) is an easy-to-follow, science-based guide to help you create healthy & balanced meals in the new year.

- Remember to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables, and divide the remaining half between healthy whole grains and healthy protein. Develop a "[sugar strategy](#)" to tackle sweets. Add in some good fat (like olive oil), and make sure you drink wisely (skip the sugar-sweetened beverages!) and your 2014 will be full of healthy, flavorful meals.

Aside from *what* you eat, though, we suggest focusing equally on *how* you eat

- Are you sitting down to eat with minimal distractions, and truly enjoying your meals?
- Are you paying attention to your food, noticing tastes and textures, savoring each bite, chewing it well, and stopping when you're no longer hungry?
- Are you allowing yourself to enjoy treats in moderate amounts, realizing that oftentimes you're satisfied with a few bites instead of an entire dessert?

These are just some ways of becoming a more mindful eater. While eating nutritious foods is a big part of becoming healthier, the other — often overlooked — half of the equation is developing healthy eating habits, and eating more mindfully. In 2014, don't resolve to follow a diet, resolve to nourish both your body and mind with each meal by slowing down, paying attention, and truly savoring your food.

Source: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2013/12/20/re-thinking-your-new-years-resolutions/>

## Tips To Avoid The Post-Holiday Slump

When the holidays arrive, they are filled with family, fun, food, and happiness — but what happens when January rolls around? Many people find themselves feeling sad and lonely. It's back to school, work, enduring the cold, and reverting back to the normalcy of the pre-holiday celebrations. It is known as the "January blues," and for many, the stress of dealing with them can take a toll on their mental, emotional, and even physical well-being. So before the new year rolls around, take a look at some of our tips for combating the January blues.



- **Identify The Reason For Your Blues**

The first step to any problem is to identify the source of it and understanding where your sadness stems from, "being low in January is very common," says Carole Gaskell, author of *Transform Your Life*, the [Daily Mail](#) reports. "But rather than pushing your feelings to one side, allow yourself to acknowledge them so you can resolve them."

- **Budget**

Setting a spending budget is important before any large sum of money is going to be spent, especially during the holidays. This way when Jan. 2, 2014, comes around there will not be a hole in your bank account, and you will have accounted for all of the money spent. "If your presents exceed the budget, either cull some names, choose a different present, or see if you can find a pre-loved version on eBay, or seek out a cheaper brand," Melissa Browne, an accountant and author, reports in the [Brisbane Times](#).

- **Get Enough Rest And Exercise**

Exercise, while good for your overall health, is especially important during stressful times, especially during the holidays. According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), "physical activity helps to bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins." Sleeping adequately is also important because it gives your body a chance to rebuild from the stressful gift shopping and the holiday parties.

- **Get Outside**

It might be cold, but getting a few minutes of sun a day could improve your happiness substantially. The [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) cites several studies where sunlight markedly improves mood, [said](#) Dale Archer, M.D., a clinical psychiatrist and contributing author to *Psychology Today*. Sometimes a significant lack of sunlight can also lead to [Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\)](#), also known as the winter blues where sadness and mood changes are affected by the shorter days and lack of sun.

- **Take A Trip**

It might seem a little rushed to take a vacation right after many of us have already had holiday time off. However, taking a trip right after the holidays has its benefits. For starters, studies have shown that vacations have a strong link to happiness. According to *The New York Times*, a study published in the journal [Applied Research in Quality of Life](#), "showed that the largest boost in happiness comes from the simple act of planning a vacation. The effect of vacation anticipation boosted happiness for eight weeks."

Source: <http://www.medicaldaily.com/january-blues-5-tips-avoid-post-holiday-slump-265826>

## "Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk"

This year's Super Bowl is Sunday, Feb. 2, and while we don't know which teams will be competing yet, we do know that Super Bowl Sunday is a very dangerous day to be on the road. "[Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk](#)" is a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration program that encourages fans to "pass their keys" to a designated driver throughout the football season. Make sure to designate a sober driver if you are drinking and take extra precautions if you are the sober driver!

Source: [http://www.nsc.org/safety\\_road/Employer%20Traffic%20Safety/Documents/Texas%20Monthly%20Newsletters/Jan%202011%20TxDOT%20Newsletter.pdf](http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Employer%20Traffic%20Safety/Documents/Texas%20Monthly%20Newsletters/Jan%202011%20TxDOT%20Newsletter.pdf)