

# The Personal View

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## Lung Cancer Risk Awareness

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death and the second most diagnosed cancer in both men and women in the United States.

Lung cancer begins in the lungs and may spread to lymph nodes or other organs in the body, such as the brain. Cancer may also spread from other organs to the lungs.

Because there are very few nerve endings in the lungs, many people with lung cancer do not show symptoms until the disease is in its later stages.

There are two main types of lung cancer: small cell and non-small cell. Non-small cell lung cancer makes up about 80 percent of cases and spreads to other parts of the body more slowly than small-cell lung cancer does. Small-cell lung cancer is almost always associated with smoking.

Cigarette smoking is the number one risk factor for lung cancer. The lifetime risk of lung cancer in nonsmokers is very small. The single best thing you can do to avoid lung cancer is to not smoke.

To further minimize your risk of developing lung cancer, test your home for radon and your workplace for industrial compounds. Also be sure to avoid air pollution whenever possible.

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## Time to Winterize the House

Winter looms, and with it comes the chance for severe weather that can cause havoc on your home's exterior and introduce other property damage risks. Use the following tips to ensure your home gets through the winter season unscathed.

- Keep the roof clean, including the gutters. Built-up clumps of leaves can block water from flowing through the gutters.
  - Consider trimming tree branches that extend over the house to minimize the collection of branches and leaves on the roof.
- Make sure the attic is insulated to prevent ice dams, which can occur when snow melts and then refreezes on a roof due to poor attic insulation.
  - Remove snow from the edges of the roof to further prevent ice dams.
- Have a professional perform an inspection on the furnace before it is used constantly throughout the day.
  - Don't forget to change the filter! It should be changed monthly, or as needed, during the winter.
- Insulate water pipes to prevent frozen pipes from bursting.
- Add caulk to drafty windows, and consider purchasing a plastic window insulator kit to prevent further draftiness.
- Have the chimney cleaned to decrease the fire risk.
  - You should also clean wood stoves for this reason.

## Check Your Vehicle's Tires

Sometimes we take for granted how reliable our vehicle's tires can be. They hold up through all kinds of weather as well as debris and potholes in the road. However, without proper maintenance and inspections, tires can lose their durability and cause accidents if they are under- or over-inflated. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, about 200 people die every year from tire-related crashes. Keep these tips in mind to get the most out of your tires.

- Make sure tires are inflated to the proper tire pressure. The proper psi can be found on the driver side door jamb and in the vehicle's owner's manual.
- The owner's manual will also tell you when to rotate the tires and may give suggestions for when to get the vehicle's suspension aligned, which can help increase tire life.
- Check the tire tread depth monthly. When a tire gets to be 2/32 inches or less, they need to be replaced.
- If your vehicle has been sitting for a long period of time, take it for a spin. Inactivity can cause tires to age faster than normal. A warmer climate with abundant sunshine also plays a factor in decreasing a tire's lifespan.



## IN THE KNOW

### Lower Winter Fuel Costs

Budgeting money for the holidays is always important, but many people often forget about the increased energy costs associated with winter until they get hit with the bill. Use the following recommendations from the Department of Energy to keep your costs in check this year.

- Cover drafty windows with heavy-duty, clear plastic sheets, or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames.
- Seal the air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes, in gaps around recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and in unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Maintain a regular service schedule for your heating systems. Replace filters once a month or as needed.
- Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. Turning it back 10 degrees at night or before leaving your home can save around 10 percent of your heating bills.
- Finally, use LED holiday light strings to save on the price of seasonal decorations.