**OSHA’s New Electronic Recordkeeping Rule**

Your Injuries Today Will Be Public Record and Searchable Next Year

OSHA has issued their final rule requiring certain employers to submit annual OSHA recordkeeping information electronically to OSHA. From there, OSHA will be posting that information on its website, making your data publicly available for anyone to review.

**Are You Affected?**

If your company has 250 or more employees at any time throughout 2016, you’re automatically included. If you have 20-249 employees, there’s only certain types of companies included, covering 66 NAICS classifications. However, that 66 covers a vast majority of businesses including manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, utility, construction, medical and more.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| If your company has… | 250+ Employees | 20-249 Employees (Covered Industries) | 20-249 Employees  (Not Covered Industries) | 19 or Fewer Employees |
| Who Reports Electronically? | All | There are 66 categories of establishments included.  (Link is below) | None | None |
| Which Records to Submit to OSHA? | OSHA 300, 300A and 301 | OSHA 300A Only | None | None |
| Electronic Data Due to OSHA | July 1 Annually for Previous Year’s Records | July 1 Annually for Previous Year’s Records | None | None |
| How Do You Calculate Number of Employees? | Count the maximum you had AT ANY TIME throughout the previous year.  So, for example, if you have 250 employees for only 2 months of the reporting year, you’d still fall in the 250+ category even if you were below it for the other 10 months. | | | |
| Do Part-Time, Seasonal and Temp Workers Count in the Final Total? | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Data for Previous Year Still Posted at Workplace Feb 1-Apr 30? | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes (10-19 employees) |
| Electronic Records Available for Viewing by Public at OSHA.gov | Yes | Yes | No | No |

**Why Online?**

OSHA says information is being posted online per President Obama’s Open Government Initiative. OSHA says that by posting the information to the internet it will “…nudge employers to improve workplace safety” and provide valuable information to employers, employees, potential investors, job seekers and customers of the business as well as researchers. All personally identifiable employee information will be removed before the records are posted to the internet.

**How to Submit**

Electronic submittal to OSHA will be done through a secure website where each company will be required to set up their own account. There are no instructions yet as to where this website is and how to create an account on it. As soon as something is published, iSi will send out the links to it. Data will be due by July 1 for the first couple of years, and then in 2019 the reporting deadline will go to March 2 each year afterward.

Remember that the electronic requirement is just an additional step. You will still need to post your OSHA information in the workplace from February 1 through April 30 as you’ve been doing all along.

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**Ensure Your Safety Incentive Programs Promote the Positive**

**OSHA Recordkeeping Rule Adds Language About Disincentivising Employees From Reporting**

Another piece put with OSHA’s recent final recordkeeping rule regarding electronic submittals was some additional language and safeguards to protect workers from retaliation or from deterrence in reporting injuries.

To meet requirements of this piece of the rule, first, make sure you’ve posted the “OSHA’s Job Safety and Health – It’s the Law” poster (2015 or newer version).

Second, ensure your safety incentive and discipline programs do not deter or discourage employees from reporting injuries and illnesses. OSHA still will allow incentive programs, but want to make sure employers know that they must be structured in a way that does NOT discourage workers from reporting injuries.

Incentive programs which withhold or deny a benefit because an employee reported an injury are illegal. These could include those which disqualify or withhold rewards from the person reporting or a whole group of workers if an injury is reported. Discipline programs which punish workers who report injuries regardless of fault is also not allowed, as is making the reporting process so cumbersome and/or filled with paperwork that it becomes easier for the employee not to do it. OSHA says you can still have incentive programs, but instead, opt for positive incentive programs which promote worker participation in safety-related activities.

###

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Industry | NAICS CODE GROUP |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 11 |
| Utilities | 22 |
| Construction | 23 |
| Manufacturing | 31-33 |
| Wholesale trade | 42 |
| Automotive parts, accessories, and tire stores | 4413 |
| Furniture stores | 4421 |
| Home furnishings stores | 4422 |
| Building material and supplies dealers | 4441 |
| Lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores | 4442 |
| Grocery stores | 4451 |
| Specialty food stores | 4452 |
| Department stores | 4521 |
| Other general merchandise stores | 4529 |
| Used merchandise stores | 4533 |
| Vending machine operators | 4542 |
| Direct selling establishments | 4543 |
| Scheduled air transportation | 4811 |
| General freight trucking | 4841 |
| Specialized freight trucking | 4842 |
| Urban transit systems | 4851 |
| Interurban and rural bus transportation | 4852 |
| Taxi and limousine service | 4853 |
| School and employee bus transportation | 4854 |
| Charter bus industry | 4855 |
| Other transit and ground passenger transportation | 4859 |
| Scenic and sightseeing transportation, land | 4871 |
| Support activities for air transportation | 4881 |
| Support activities for rail transportation | 4882 |
| Support activities for water transportation | 4883 |
| Support activities for road transportation | 4884 |
| Other support activities for transportation | 4889 |
| Postal service | 4911 |
| Couriers and express delivery services | 4921 |
| Local messengers and local delivery | 4922 |
| Warehousing and storage | 4931 |
| Cable and other subscription programming | 5152 |
| Lessors of real estate | 5311 |
| Automotive equipment rental and leasing | 5321 |
| Consumer goods rental | 5322 |
| General rental centers | 5323 |
| Services to buildings and dwellings | 5617 |
| Waste collection | 5621 |
| Waste treatment and disposal | 5622 |
| Remediation and other waste management services | 5629 |
| Other ambulatory health care services | 6219 |
| General medical and surgical hospitals | 6221 |
| Psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals | 6222 |
| Specialty (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals | 6223 |
| Nursing care facilities | 6231 |
| Residential mental retardation, mental health and substance abuse facilities | 6232 |
| Community care facilities for the elderly | 6233 |
| Other residential care facilities | 6239 |
| Community food and housing, and emergency and other relief services | 6242 |
| Vocational rehabilitation services | 6243 |
| Performing arts companies | 7111 |
| Spectator sports | 7112 |
| Museums, historical sites, and similar institutions | 7121 |
| Amusement parks and arcades | 7131 |
| Gambling industries | 7132 |
| Traveler accommodation | 7211 |
| RV (recreational vehicle) parks and recreational camps | 7212 |
| Rooming and boarding houses | 7213 |
| Special food services | 7223 |
| Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment (except automotive and electronic) repair and maintenance | 8113 |
| Dry-cleaning and laundry services | 8123 |

**OSHA Electronic Recordkeeping: How Long Will the Current Rule Last?**

The deadline for employers to submit their injuries and illnesses for 2016 electronically through the new [OSHA Injury Tracking Application website](https://www.osha.gov/injuryreporting/index.html) is December 1st. Recent actions by OSHA suggest this rule has a potential to look differently next year.

In January, a lawsuit against the rule was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. The court stayed the ruling to allow OSHA to review the rule. As a condition of the stay, the court required OSHA to file status reports with the court. In the final status report, OSHA acknowledged that they had reviewed the rule, have drafted regulatory text, summaries and explanations for proposed changes and that their economists are currently working on the economic impact analysis of proposed changes.

Thus, the electronic recordkeeping rule is likely to be changed, but there are no indications of what will be changed or when. The two most contentious parts of the rule have been making injury/illness data for each company publicly available online and additional anti-retaliation rules which could affect certain types of employee safety incentive programs and post-accident drug testing procedures.

In the meantime, if your company is required to submit electronically, the rule stands as-is and you will need to get your data uploaded by December 1. Who is required to submit electronically? [Check out our previous blog](https://isienvironmental.com/index.php/blog-osha-injury-reporting-website/) describing which companies are affected and what the process for submitting electronically entails. Need help with the upload or sorting this all out? [Contact us today](https://isienvironmental.com/index.php/contact-us/)!

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| Who Reports Electronically? | All | There are 66 categories of establishments included.  (Link is below) | None | None |
| Which Records to Submit to OSHA? | 300A (2017 Only)  OSHA 300, 300A and 301 (2018 and beyond) | OSHA 300A Only | None | None |
| Electronic Data Due to OSHA | Dec. 15, 2017 for 2016 records | Dec. 15, 2017 for 2016 records | None | None |
| How Do You Calculate Number of Employees? | Count the maximum you had AT ANY TIME throughout the previous year.  So, for example, if you have 250 employees for only 2 months of 2016, you’d still fall in the 250+ category even if you were below it for the other 10 months. | | | |
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**What OSHA Says About Using Online Training Courses**

OK, OK, before anyone has a chance to say “of course you’re going to write THIS article,” we want to make it clear that although iSi may be known for the face-to-face classes we hold at our offices and onsite at client facilities, we DO write and produce online and computer-based training modules. Thus, we are in favor of training in all forms, including online. Online and computer-based classes can be a great tool for your training program, especially in places where there is high turnover, multiple shifts, or high numbers of employees at the facility.

**OSHA’s Opinion of Online Training**

Recently, an OSHA interpretation letter was published that asked the question:

*Are online training programs acceptable for compliance with OSHA’s worker training requirements?*

The response from OSHA said that although online training can be a valuable part of your training program, you cannot use it by itself to meet OSHA requirements unless it contains hands-on interactive elements. OSHA says that training requires a mastery of the material that would include safe uses of tools and equipment. The students must be able to interact with the proper equipment and tools. This benefits not only the new student, but is a good refresher for those who are more skilled and also allows a qualified instructor to make sure the student has mastered the skill.

The interpretation letter references a previous letter published in 1994 that mentions HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) as an example. In HAZWOPER, hands-on use of personal protective equipment is very important. Training should include how to don and doff the PPE and include a way to ensure the student is comfortable doing so and is doing it correctly. The information also needs to be able to somewhat be tailored to the student’s situation. OSHA adds that this hands-on training needs to be conducted in a non-hazardous location as well.

This would also be the case for any powered industrial vehicle training. In each of those courses, there is a classroom portion about the hazards that could be done online. However, specific hands-on training with the actual equipment, whether that be a forklift, a scissor lift, a tug that pulls an airplane, etc., needs to be conducted in a hands-on fashion with the student operating the equipment and an instructor evaluating his/her performance and providing guidance.

**Ability to Ask Questions**

Both interpretation letters mention the importance of the student to be able to ask questions of the instructor. Some of the topics may be unfamiliar, and OSHA values the student’s ability to ask questions and receive them in a timely manner. They say that not having this interaction impedes the student’s ability to comprehend the material and retain it.

OSHA suggests that to take care of this requirement, that a way to ask questions be built into the program. They mention a hotline number could be used, but you may also be able to use email or chat.

Regardless of what you use, the contact needs to go directly to a qualified trainer and the responses need to come back in a timely fashion.

To review these OSHA interpretation letters, read the one from [2019 here](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2019-07-11), and the one from [1994 here](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/1994-11-22).

Are you using online training for your company and need to rethink how you’re administering it based on OSHA’s guidance? Let iSi help you! Contact us today for guidance, hands-on assistance, or customized online training modules that can be imported into your company’s learning management system.

EPA’s “Once In, Always In” May Be Officially on the Way Out

EPA has proposed a rule that would officially eliminate the air regulations rule of “Once In, Always In” for hazardous air pollutant (HAP) emissions. As a result, EPA is estimating reduced regulatory burden for thousands of locations, and thousands of others could now have a better incentive to reduce air emissions.

**Background: Air Emissions Regs**

Locations that emit one or more of the 187 named hazardous air pollutants above a certain threshold are classified as “major sources.” As a result, they become subject to a number of additional regulatory obligations. They are required to follow certain rules established by their related Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) rules and are required to complete annual Title V Air Emissions permitting.

If locations have HAP air emissions below the stated threshold, they are classified as “area sources.” The regulatory requirements at this level are much less stringent.

**What’s Once In, Always In?**

EPA’s Once In, Always In policy stated that once a location reaches that major source classification, they were always going to be a major source, not matter what – even if the company took steps to reduce emissions below that threshold. It was developed in 1995 as a guidance memo and originally intended to only be in place until the agency could propose amendments, but it stayed in permanently.

As part of the 2017 Executive Orders for agencies to review and reduce regulations, EPA looked at Once In, Always In. They determined the Clean Air Act really did not specify or support time limits. As a result, EPA issued its own interpretation memo saying there was no basis for major sources to have that classification permanently. These sources should have the ability to reclassify as area sources if they implemented the controls and reductions necessary to become area sources.

This new proposed rule is the formal step to make this interpretation final.

**The Benefits**

This rule will benefit companies that have already implemented technologies to control HAP emissions, and companies whose processes or operations have changed to the degree that they no longer emit or have the capabilities to emit HAPs above the threshholds.

EPA estimates that out of 7,920 major sources, approximately half will now be eligible to reclassify as an area source. Besides the lessened compliance burden, EPA estimates costs savings of $168.9 million in the first year, and $163-$183 million each year after.

Those companies who are still major sources will also now have a concrete incentive to make changes to operations that would further reduce HAP emissions.

**Public Comment**

Find out more information about this rule [here](https://www.epa.gov/stationary-sources-air-pollution/reclassification-major-sources-area-sources-under-section-112-clean). EPA is also soliciting public comment at regulations.gov. They want to hear about all aspects of their proposal including their interpretation of Once In, Always In, requirements for establishing effective HAP limits, allowing limits issued by states/local/tribal agencies as effective as long as they are legally and practically enforceable, and ideas for safeguards to ensure emissions are not increased.

**Oklahoma’s New Stormwater Regulations for Industrial Activities**

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) has replaced its Multi-Sector General Stormwater Permit with a new version which is effective July 5th. This permit governs the stormwater activities of industrial facilities and makes a number of changes from its previous permit, issued in 2011.

Any company authorized under the 2011 permit will need to reapply to ODEQ for a new authorization within the next 90 days, that is, before October 3rd. This includes revising the facility’s Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP3), submitting a new Notice of Intent, and submitting application fees.

Any company must have authorization from ODEQ prior to discharging stormwater from industrial activities. Allowable and non-allowable activities have been updated in the new permit as well as limits, types of facilities, types of activities, and covered discharges. Other changes include clarified NOI requirements, procedures for permit coverage, control measures and effluent limits, and conditions which need corrective action.

Two additional monitoring requirements have been added: impaired waters monitoring, which is to occur once per year, and “other monitoring” which is additional monitoring ODEQ can require for your facility.

There have been eight changes to the SWP3 requirements as well. Among those, permittees must now describe the type and location of the control measures chosen to comply with effluent levels as well as how they chose each of those measures. The SWP3 must also document the evaluation process for the presence of any unauthorized non-stormwater discharges and include a certification.

For more information regarding the 26 overall changes incorporated into new permit, for help in sorting out how this updated regulation will affect your facility, or for assistance in updating your plan before the deadline approaches, please contact our team and we’d be happy to assist you.

**OHSAS 18001 and ISO 45001: What’s the Difference?**

This Monday, a final version of new ISO 45001 will be published, creating an official ISO standard for occupational health and safety programs.

In the early 2000s there were international standards for environmental management systems with ISO 14001, but not health and safety. Thus, a British Standard was developed, called Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001.

On Monday (November 27), an official ISO standard for occupational health and safety, ISO 45001, will be published. ISO 45001 takes much of what’s already in OHSAS 18001 and adds to it, reorganizes it to match current ISO formats, and makes modifications. Thus if you’re already OHSAS 18001 certified, you will have a very good head start on ISO 45001 certification.

ISO 45001 brings the responsibility of safety to company leadership and how it incorporates into the entire organization, rather than making it a responsibility of management. The standard has more detailed clauses lining out its expectations of employee involvement, documenting results and program effectiveness, evaluating risks, making changes where necessary and how safety affects all affected parties, not only employees but contractors, outsourced operations, vendors, etc.

Here are just a few of the main differences between the two standards:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 18001 | 45001 |
| British Standard | International Organization of Standardization Standard |
| Reactive planning | Proactive planning |
| Hazard control | Risk evaluation, reduction and prevention |
| Procedures are prepared | Documented results are required |
| Safety management personnel play leadership role | Top management plays leadership role |
| Company management reviews the process after development | Company leadership takes leading role to ensure it fits within the overall organization’s processes. |
| Safety and health is the responsibility of safety management personnel | Safety and health is the responsibility of leadership and the overall management system of the organization. External and internal issues related to the safety management system should be addressed by leadership. Workers and interested parties’ needs should be addressed and incorporated into the plan. |
| Employee participation consultation | Everyone, including leadership, is responsible for safety. Workers should be provided education to help identify risks and everyone should participate. Internal audits and risk assessments should be shared with all employees and non-managers should participate in internal audits, risk assessments and incident investigation. |
| Information and communication procedures are prepared | Information and communication documentation is required including who, what, when, the objective of the communication and was it effective? |
| — | * Outsourced processes, procurement and contractors are addressed. * Hierarchy of controls are to be used. * Procurement of goods are to be considered. * Contractor controls and communication requirements for their workers, your workers and any other affected parties are required. |

**OSHA Issues Noise Regional Emphasis Enforcement Program**

**General Industry and Construction Both Affected**

OSHA has reissued a noise hazard regional emphasis program for Region VII. OSHA inspectors will be conducting targeted inspections for noise for certain NAICS categories in both general industry and construction. Even though this particular emphasis program is for Region VII (Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska), OSHA has noise-related regional emphasis programs in all states except for those that fall in the Western and Pacific Regions (9 and 10).

OSHA says it’s targeting workplaces with excessive noise levels in order to prevent permanent hearing loss. They say 22 million workers are working in hazardous noise levels and 53% do not wear hearing protection. In a NIOSH study, 52% of noise-exposed tested construction workers admitted to not wearing hearing protection, and 25% of tested workers had a hearing loss that affected their day-to-day activities. Hearing loss is an OSHA recordable injury. Even short-term exposures can cause ringing in the ears, reduced productivity and stress.

**Who Will Be Inspected?**

OSHA has made a list of the NAICS codes from both general industry and construction that they have found commonly have noise hazards. Data was gathered from a couple different sources. First, they looked at inspections conducted between 2018 and 2020 where there were citations for noise. They found the industries who had the most citations for these issues, and have sorted them from the most inspected group to the least inspected group. OSHA also created the State Workers Compensation Data Profile. This collected data of the NAICS groups that were reporting noise-related injuries and illnesses throught workers compensation cases within that same time period. These lists were combined to generate a master list of NAICS groups.

These are the NAICS groups that have been identified for the targeted inspections:

**GENERAL INDUSTRY NAICS**

2111: Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution

3119: Other Food Manufacturing

3211: Sawmills and Wood Preservation

3219: Other Wood Product Manufacturing

3241: Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing

3261: Plastics Products Manufacturing

3315: Foundries

3323: Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing

3327: Machine Shops; Turned Product; and Screw, Nut and Bolt Manufacturing

3328: Coating, Engraving, Heat Treating and Allied Activities

3329: Other Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing

3364: Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing

4239: Miscellaneous Durable Goods Merchant Wholesalers

4811: Scheduled Air Transportation

4922: Local Messengers and Local Delivery

**CONSTRUCTION NAICS**

2361: Residential Building Construction

2362: Nonresidential Building Construction

2372: Land Subdivision

2373: Highway, Street and Bridge Construction

2379: Other Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction

2382: Building Equipment Contractors

2383: Building Finishing Contractors

2389: Other Specialty Trade Contractors

**Inspections – What Will OSHA Look For?**

OSHA will start the inspection by reviewing programs and records, including your:

* OSHA 300 logs for threshold hearing shifts and other health hazards
* Noise sampling data, including past noise surveys that include sound level measurements
* Exposure Monitoring Program
* Hearing Conservation Program
* Hearing conservation training records
* Audiograms for the past 3 years
* Records in conjunction with access to employee exposure and medical records (1910.1020)
* Information on temporary workers so they can evaluate your program in relation to them
* Information on PPE provided and whether it’s voluntary or required and where
* Schematic diagram of your facility (for noise mapping) and departments where noise may be an issue
* Union representatives will be questioned on noise and hearing conservation efforts

**Inspectors Will Conduct Sampling**

From there, OSHA will conduct a walk around to observe your processes and find opportunities for noise mapping. They will take pictures of workers not wearing their hearing protection correctly, or those in noisy areas not wearing any protection at all. They will also interview workers in areas where there are greater than 80 dba of noise found.

Inspectors will conduct noise mapping with a sound meter and, depending on their findings, may need to conduct additional noise dosimetry on individual workers. OSHA instructions for their inspectors advises inspectors to try to do noise dosimetry the very first day they’re there, and to get the dosimeters on the workers as soon as possible. Only 6 or more hours are necessary to support a citation. Thus, they may want to do dosimetry immediately to get as many hours of data as possible. However, guidance also suggests they do the dosimetry on your second shift workers if the inspection gets started later in the day. If they need additional sampling in other areas, they will come back for additional follow-up sampling for full shifts on other days.

**Protect Your Company With Side-by-Side Sampling**

As an employer, it’s advisable that you conduct side-by-side sampling of any noise sampling or dosimetry OSHA is conducting. This means you would have someone conduct noise sampling alongside the inspector to assure that the samples collected are similar to what OSHA is collecting. You can also choose to put a dosimeter on the same employees to duplicate and check noise dosimetry. It’s your right as an employer to do this and may help in negotiations later if there are discrepancies between your results and those of OSHA’s.

**iSi Can Help You Prepare and Get Your Program in Order**

iSi can help you get your documentation in order in the event you are going to be inspected. This includes:

* Industrial hygiene audits and assessments to see where you stand with occupational health and exposure-related OSHA regulations
* Conducting noise mapping and dosimetry so you have your required records on file
* Developing Exposure Monitoring Programs
* Written Hearing Conservation Programs
* Hearing conservation training
* Audiograms for the past 3 years
* PPE evaluations
* Side-by-side noise sampling during inspections
* Safety professionals for to be onsite and assist during OSHA inspections

[Contact us today](https://isienvironmental.com/pricing/) for a quote!

**NIOSH Study Affirms OSHA’s Annual Fit-Test Requirement**

A study published this year by NIOSH has affirmed the need for OSHA’s annual requirement for fit-testing for filtering facepiece respirators and other tight-fitting respirators.

In its study, NIOSH followed 229 subjects over three years’ time, making fit and physical characteristic measurements every 6 months. It was found that after one year, 10% of the subjects had changes in fit. In two years it was 20%, and in the third year, it was up to 26%. OSHA’s intended threshold for fit changes, when it made its rules in 1998, was 7% annually.

NIOSH also found that subjects who had lost 20 or more pounds had respirator fit changes. The greater the weight loss, the higher the chance that the respirator fit changed. Thus, NIOSH recommends those persons who lose 20 or more pounds get priority fit-test scheduling, even it is less than a year since their last fit-test.

In addition to weight loss and gain, other events such as dental changes, facial scarring and cosmetic surgery can affect respirator fit as well.

If your company has a group of employees who need their required annual fit-testing and/or their required annual respiratory protection refresher training, iSi can help! Request a price quote here.

*Note: NIOSH’s study can be found at: https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2016/01/05/fit-testing/*

**Be Safe When Ringing in the New Year**

**New Years Celebration Safety**

This year has been a crazy one, and one that many of us would like to forget. As a result, there’s a big likelihood that there will be a lot of celebration this year when saying goodbye to 2020 and hello to 2021.

Unlike new years celebrations of the past, we may not be gathering with large groups of people with parties and crowds. There may be a lot of other smaller gatherings with family members and close friends. Regardless of whether you’re going out, or staying in, safety should always be top of mind. Here are a few tips to share about being safe when ringing in the new year:

1. If you’re going to party with others, limit the number of people at your event and make sure you’re following social distancing. Consider outdoor events (if possible).
2. Avoid loud music where guests will have to shout.
3. Provide plenty of hand sanitizer and handwashing stations. Sanitize high traffic sur-faces such as doorknobs, handles, serving utensils and bathrooms throughout the night. Keep a stock of extra masks around.
4. If you do have guests, avoid accidental sharing of glasses by making sure everyone’s glass or champagne flute looks different. Use wine glass markers, colored glasses, or look into single serving wines or cans of bubbly.
5. Drink responsibly — This can be whether you decide to go out, or even if you choose to stay home. Alcohol and safety don’t always go hand-in-hand. Pace yourself, and if you’re away from home, make sure you have a designated driver. Make sure that if you’re the host, you’re providing food to help make sure guests aren’t drinking on an empty stomach and if you’re the attendee, make sure you eat something. If you don’t know if there will be food at the party because of COVID procedures, eat ahead of time.
6. No guns or fireworks — Getting rid of 2020 may be a good thing, and may warrant a grand gesture, but shooting guns into the air is dangerous because the bullets will land somewhere and they could seriously hurt. Fireworks can be dangerous and may break local laws and noise ordinances. Stick to sparklers and noise makers.
7. Keep pets and children away from lit candles and fireplaces. Also, keep matches and lighters in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.
8. Do not leave food unattended in the kitchen when you are cooking, this is especially true when frying and boiling items on the stovetop. Keep children and pets away from cooking surfaces and hot pans and dishes.
9. Be mindful of your car. New Year’s Day is a top holiday for car thefts! If you’ll be away, don’t leave your car overnight, leave it at home if you won’t be driving home. Keep it in the driveway, and keep it locked.
10. And when it comes time for the New Year’s kiss, stick to kissing someone from your own household. :)