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## Safety is Always in Season

### Shopping for the Change of Seasons? How to Stay Safe at the Mall

(ARA) - With the colder weather just around the corner, lots of shoppers are taking advantage of seasonal sales and flocking to the malls in search of a new, warmer wardrobe. Before you head out to a busy shopping center, it's a good idea to review some building transportation safety tips.

Riding in an elevator has become so commonplace that few of us give much thought to our safety when stepping through those automatic doors. Nevertheless, it is crucial to take preventive measures and be proactive about elevator safety. Familiarizing oneself with common safety practices and taking extra caution is especially important in well-populated buildings such as offices, libraries, malls and amusement parks.

Safety guidelines every elevator passenger should follow:

- \* Be aware of health conditions that could contribute to falls or accidents. Be extra careful if you wear prescription glasses, have an illness or take medications that affect your eyesight, mobility or balance.
- \* Accompany children in elevators at all times.
- \* Watch your step -- the elevator car may not be perfectly level with the floor.
- \* Always stand clear of the elevator doors, keeping belongings away from the opening. Stand aside for exiting passengers and hold children by the hand.
- \* Never try to stop a closing door with hands or feet. Instead, wait for the next elevator.
- \* If the arriving elevator is full, do not attempt to cram in and fit. Rather, wait for the next car.

Industry experts estimate that Americans and Canadians ride 750,000 elevators about 210 billion times per year, totaling a whopping 100 million miles annually. Considered one of the safest forms of transportation in the world, elevators move an estimated 325 million passengers daily. However, because riding them has become so routine, rules and vital safety precautions can be neglected. "Focusing on proper elevator conduct is imperative to preventing an injury or accident from occurring," says Edward A. Donoghue, spokesperson, administrator and secretary of the National Elevator Industry, Inc. (NEII). "Most elevator accidents can be prevented simply by being aware of surroundings and by following simple safety rules."

The National Elevator Industry Inc. (NEII) is a leading trade association dedicated to educating both the general public and industry professionals about escalator and elevator safety. For more information about elevators and escalators, log onto [www.neii.org](http://www.neii.org).

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What to do if you are in a stalled elevator:

1. Push the "Door Open" Button

If you are near the landing, the door will open. Slowly and carefully step out of the elevator. Be sure to watch your step as the elevator floor may or may not be level with the landing.

2. Remain Calm

If the door does not open, you are still safe. Do not try to exit the elevator. Wait for trained emergency personnel to arrive. Even if the air temperature feels warm, there is plenty of air circulating in the elevator and its shaft way.

3. Press the Alarm or Help Button, and Use Any Available Communication Systems

Push the alarm button and wait for someone to respond to you.

In newer elevators, there will be a HELP button instead of an alarm button. This will place a call to a party that is trained to take action (i.e. elevator company, alarm company, etc.). It will give the exact location of the building and elevator you are in. Trained emergency personnel will answer the call for service within several minutes.

Some elevators have a two-way speaker system or telephone that will allow for communication between you and the building or rescue personnel. Do not be alarmed if you cannot be heard or if the phone does not work. Some phones are designed to only receive calls. Trained personnel should call when they arrive at the building.

4. Relax, and DO NOT Try to Extract Yourself from the Elevator

Never try to exit a stalled elevator car. It is extremely dangerous. Always wait for trained emergency personnel.

\* Your best course of action is to relax, get comfortable and wait for professional assistance.

\* You may be inconvenienced, but remember that you are SAFE!

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