

PERSONAL INJURY POST

820 S. Main St. McAllen, TX 78501
(956) 587-5833
www.go-lawfirm.com



Ricardo A. Garcia

Lino H. Ochoa

Romeo Rendon III

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

DECEMBER 2020

A Year-End Review

Finding the Positives Despite a Hard Year

There is no question that for most of us, 2020 has been the most difficult year of our lives. It is safe to say that none of us expected 2020 to go the way it has. In fact, most people probably can't wait for 2020 to end and wish this year had never happened. The COVID-19 pandemic caught us off guard and ill prepared for the hurt and pain many of us have endured, whether health or financial, or both. Our families and friends became ill and unfortunately are no longer with us. In addition, our families and friends have lost jobs, had their pay cut, or have had to close their businesses.

Yet, despite the negatives and grief this year has forced on us, I believe we must remain positive about 2021 and grateful for the lessons we have learned.

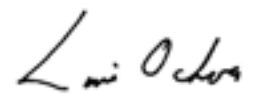
These last 10 months made us realize just how fragile life, as well as our health and safety, can be. Many of us were caught in the day-in and day-out grind of a busy life. We forgot to appreciate our friends, our family and our jobs. To some extent, most people took for granted the freedoms we enjoyed pre-pandemic. In the past, we could go to the grocery store, go shopping, have parties and get-togethers with our family and friends without worrying about wearing our masks or wondering if it would be safe to go without endangering our lives. We

could enjoy ourselves by going to the movies, attending family get-togethers, weddings, and family events. Now, we can't do many of these activities anymore without careful consideration and safety measures in place.

I have tried to approach this pandemic as a wake-up call to celebrate the good things in life. We took for granted the freedoms we had to do what we wanted when we wanted. As a result, no one took the time to stop and smell the roses. I can now say that living through this pandemic has helped me better understand the hurt, pain, economic hardship, and the loss of life that many of our clients have suffered.

Looking at the positives in our lives allows us to prioritize what is most important. Ultimately, it is our health, faith, family, friends, and our freedom that makes us happy.

I am hopeful that when 2020 is finally over, we can continue to focus on the positives and become the best we can be. On behalf of the entire Garcia & Ochoa family, we sincerely wish you and your family a great new year full of happiness and great health, all while being surrounded by family and friends.


Lino Ochoa

"Yet, despite the negatives and grief this year has forced on us, I believe there is still some good to be found."

HOLIDAY HACKS FOR THE BUSY PROFESSIONAL

4 Tips for a Less Exhausting Holiday Season



The holidays are an incredibly busy time of year. Between work and home, it can feel like there isn't enough daylight to get everything done. We have projects to complete, emails to answer, dinners to plan, gifts to buy — and family is coming in from out of town. Is it possible to take care of everything and not be completely exhausted by the end of it? While we can't answer that definitively, we can share a few "holiday hacks" to help you get more out of your time.

Put work aside. Give yourself blocks of time to focus on one thing at a time. You may be tempted to multitask, but for your mental health, don't do it. Focusing on one thing at a time produces better results (this applies equally to cooking as it does to client work) and you'll feel better through the process.

Delegate — at home! You delegate assignments at work, so why not do the same at home? Start with your immediate family and work your way out. Give everyone a task: Someone does the grocery shopping. Someone is in charge of a main course dish. Another is on side-dish duty. Others get dessert. Don't forget to assign a clean-up crew. Save yourself for the tasks you REALLY want to do.

Take frequent breaks. When you have a lot going on, frequent 5–10 minute minibreaks can go a long way in easing the mental pressure. Don't hesitate to take brain breaks throughout the day. Go for a quick walk around the building or neighborhood. Read a chapter of your book. Play a quick game on your phone.

Say no to the kitchen. When your time is precious, why spend a lot of time in the kitchen? While some find cooking a joy, others find it burdensome. If you're in the latter group, it's okay to go the boxed or prepared meal route when time is short. Boxed meals can still be prepared with love, and you can get high-quality frozen dishes or freshly prepared meals from your favorite grocery store. The time and energy you save is worth the investment.

In 2020, we have more options than ever to make life easier. So, enjoy the holidays a little more by doing the things you love and using these tips to make the most of your time and energy this season.

A FLAWED PRODUCT

It Is Not the Fault of the Consumer

When someone buys a product from a company or store, it's only natural to assume that the product is safe to use. In some circumstances, however, there is something wrong. At Garcia & Ochoa, we understand that the injuries that result from these faulty products are not the fault of the consumer. It is up to the manufacturer and business (who sold the item) to ensure it is safe for the public.

CASE FACTS: On the day our client was injured, she was operating a winch as she helped move a boat. Unfortunately, the winch lacked proper safety features to prevent injury, which resulted in our client's severe injuries.

The winch, failing to operate properly, trapped one of her fingers within the mechanism. In an attempt to remove her finger from the device, she used the remote that was provided with the winch, but the remote too failed to operate accordingly. Once her hand was free, she underwent several surgeries and eventually lost a finger.

THE OUTCOME: This unfortunate incident was not due to the negligence on our client's part; it was the manufacturer. The

3 CHRISTMAS SAFETY TIPS

Stay Safe and Happy This Holiday Season





manufacturer designed, created, marketed, and sold the winch in a defective state that when used, resulted in severe injury. Not only this, but the product did not come with adequate safety instructions to reduce the dangers. Our team immediately began digging into the problem.

We not only discovered that there had been another design but also that it was both safer and entirely economically practicable. However, despite knowing that the current design created higher risks, the manufacturer still sold the product. Additionally, the business in which our client purchased the winch was also at fault. As a company that markets professional care and use of such products, it was their duty to ensure that our client purchased a product that was not only safe to use but contained adequate safety instructions.

This particular case was especially challenging since the manufacturer was not within the U.S. It is difficult to settle foreign cases, but our attorneys were not deterred. We successfully settled this case and made sure the neglect of the manufacturer would not harm anyone else.

The holidays are known to be a time for merriment, but without proper precautions, they can quickly become a time of gloom. While you prepare to enjoy everything the holidays offer, take some time to follow these safety tips.

Water the Christmas tree.

Christmas trees, while a popular and beautiful decoration for the holidays, are a fire hazard. The NFPA states that a Christmas tree can go up in flames within seconds, especially if the tree is dry. "A dry tree can catch fire and burn faster than newspaper," they explained in one video.

If you have a Christmas tree this year, be sure to water your tree regularly. Never leave the tree stand empty of water. When it seems as though the tree is not absorbing any water, cut off two inches from the bottom to expose fresh wood.

Take care of electrical circuits.

For many people, putting up Christmas lights is one of the most anticipated times of year. Whether they line our Christmas trees, homes, or outside foliage, there's something special about seeing those twinkling lights. Unfortunately, they can take a large toll on our home's electricity. To avoid overloading your circuits, make sure you know what your house can power and what's already being powered before plugging in several strings of Christmas lights.

Schedule package deliveries.

One of the best ways to avoid crowded stores during the holidays is to shop online. It's not only easy to do but can also save you plenty of time: Get all your Christmas shopping done in a single day without leaving the house! With all of these packages headed your way, it's also important that you stay cautious. Package theft increases this time of year, but you can take steps to avoid becoming a victim. Be sure to have your package delivered during a time when someone is home or to your workplace if you're unable to be home.

FESTIVE APPLE CIDER

Inspired by BoulderLocavore.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lemon
- 1 gallon pure apple cider
- 1 large orange, thinly sliced crosswise
- 2 tsp whole cloves
- 2 tsp allspice berries
- 1 inch fresh ginger, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp honey
- 3 cinnamon sticks

DIRECTIONS

1. Using a paring knife, shave the lemon peel off in curls. Reserve the curls and save the lemon for use in a different recipe.
2. In a large slow cooker, combine the lemon peel with all other ingredients. Cook on low for 3–4 hours.
3. If desired, use a sieve to strain the spices. Serve and enjoy!



BE INSPIRED

You are never
too old to set
another goal
or to dream a
new dream.

~ C. S. Lewis

INSIDE This Issue

- 1 2020: A Year-End Review
- 2 Want to Make Your Holidays a Little Easier?
Fault Lies with the Manufacturer
- 3 Keeping Your Holiday Cheer Strong!
Festive Apple Cider
- 4 3 Fool-Proof Ways to Pay for the Holidays Without Going Broke

3 Gift-Giving Tips

That Won't Kill Your Savings

Ah, the holidays. It's a time of sweet treats, family, and giving back — and sometimes giving a little too much. When it comes to the perfect holiday gift, many people spend too much money. The average American spends nearly \$1,000 on gifts during the December holidays alone!

It's possible to cut back and make it to January without major debt. Here's how.

Check your list — twice!

The list is going to be your secret weapon to tackling the holidays with your savings still intact. Start by writing down the name of every person you'd like to get a gift for. Now, with the exception of your immediate family members, narrow the names down to your top five — top 10 if you're really popular. Now, place the names of the people who didn't make the cut into a second list. If you still feel the need to do *something* for them, send homemade cookies or a handwritten note instead of purchasing something. This limits how much you actually have to spend!

Think beyond store-bought or expensive items.

Sure, everyone wants this holiday season's "it" item, but sometimes the best gifts don't even come wrapped

under the tree. Instead, look to your own talents as a clue to what you should give. If you're a great crafter, create something unique for the people on your list. If you can offer the gift of time, provide a free night of babysitting for your friends with kids or an experience at the local theater. These gifts have a bonus factor: Recipients love the gift when they open it, and they love it when they get to use it!

Set a budget — and stick to it.

Setting a holiday budget ensures you only spend what you can afford. It also narrows down your search. If you choose to buy your neighbor something, but they aren't your top priority, set their budget at a lower level, like \$25–\$50. If you have a sibling who has had a rough year and you'd like to make their holidays a little brighter, bump their budget up. This narrows the focus of what you're looking for so you don't stumble into something you can't afford.

Ultimately, it's the spirit of giving during the holidays that makes them so rewarding. With a little ingenuity, you can be generous and avoid the stress of excess debt come January.

