

## Holiday Fire Safety

The holiday season should be a joyous time of year without worrying about losing a loved one or home due to the ravages of fire. Follow these simple holiday fire safety tips so the holidays can be memorable.

### CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY TIPS

- If you cut down your own tree, as soon as you get home, place it in water and store in a cool environment until ready to display.
- Before placing the tree in a stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk
- Ensure your tree remains well moisturized by checking the water level at least twice daily.
- Avoid placing a tree near a fireplace or furnace outlet as the heat emitted will cause the tree to dry out more rapidly.
- NEVER place lit candles on a Christmas tree.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.

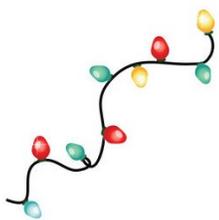


### HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Did you know holiday lights are estimated to have been involved with 150 home structure fires between 2007 and 2011? Can you guess what the number one item first ignited from an electrical failure or malfunction is? The answer is wire and cable insulation due to plugging in too many strings of lights together.

### HOLIDAY LIGHTS SAFETY TIPS

- Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords as well as loose bulb connections.
- Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets, and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



### ESCAPE PLANNING

- Make an escape plan that shows two ways out of every room and have everyone practice the plan before an emergency occurs.
- Practice escaping from a fire by crawling low to the floor to the nearest exit, free of smoke and flames.
- Have everyone agree on a meeting place out-side. In an emergency, get out first and then call for help.
- Never re-enter a burning building.

## Holiday Fire Safety

### CANDLE FIRES

Did you know, historically twice the number of home candle fires occur during the December holiday season.

### CANDLE FIRE SAFETY TIPS



- Burn candles inside a one-foot circle of safety, free of everything that can burn.
- Keep candles away from Christmas trees and flammable decorations.
- Do not place candles in windows where blinds or curtains can close over them.
- Keep wicks trimmed to 1/4 inch, and extinguish candles when they burn down to within 2 inches of the holder.

### Other Winter Fire Safety Tips

- If there is a fire hydrant near your home you can assist the fire department by keeping the hydrant clear of snow and ice so in the event it is needed, it can be located.
- Be sure every level of your home has a working smoke alarm, and be sure to check and clean it every month.
- Never use a range or oven as a supplementary heating device. This is a safety hazard and can produce potentially deadly fumes.
- Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed in every home to warn of deadly build-ups.
- NEVER try to thaw frozen water pipes with a blowtorch or other open flame. The pipe could conduct the heat and ignite a fire inside a wall. Use hot water or a Underwriters Laboratories© (UL) device such as a hair dryer for thawing.
- And finally, know how to contact the fire department for any emergency.



Thank you State Fire Commissioner, Tim Solobay and Kraig Herman, Public Education Specialist from the Office of the State Fire Commissioner for providing this article.