

CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY

1. When picking a tree, check the needles. Run your fingers through the needles on the branches and shake the tree. If the needles come off easily, choose another tree. This is a sign the tree is drying out. A dry tree will not tolerate the temperature of Christmas lights.
2. Do not put the tree directly from the cold mountain to your warm house. The tree has been at high altitude with cold air and *sudden* immersion into a warm building at a lower altitude puts it into shock.
3. Put the tree in a bucket of water placed on the cool side of the house, for at least 24 hours. While outside, hose the tree off to moisten the needles, clean off the dust, and eliminate the unwanted bugs.
4. When bringing the tree in the house, cut one inch off the trunk to help the tree absorb water.
5. Make sure to check and fill the tree container everyday (a six foot tree uses a half gallon of water everyday). Christmas trees like sugar added to their tree water.
6. Secure the tree and tree stand to prevent tipping over.
7. Keep the tree out of the pathways and exits of your house.
8. Keep the tree away from heating devices. It will dry out, even if it has plenty of water.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION TIPS

1. The decorations on the tree can be poisonous to children and pets. Be sure to keep tinsel, garland, and greenery out of reach of small children and pets.
2. Check all light strings to ensure wires are acceptable. Look for signs of worn, frayed, or blackened wires. Throw away damaged light strings.
3. Check all bulb sockets. Make sure all sockets have bulbs in them. If you have a bad socket, put a bulb in it anyway to prevent electrical shocks and the possibility of fire.
4. Connect no more than three strings together on the Christmas tree.
5. Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available.
6. Outdoor lights and wires - Before you put light strings or extension cords outside, check and make sure they are UL approved and marked for outdoor use. Make sure plugs are hung above the ground, away from where rain or snow could get inside the plugs.
7. After the holiday, remove all the decorations and remove the tree from house before it dries out. A dry tree is a fire danger.

FIREPLACE SAFETY

1. Have a chimney sweep check your chimney to make sure there isn't build-up or remove out if there is one. This will reduce the risk of a chimney fire.
2. Burning wrapping paper can cause problems because it burns hotter than wood and creates embers that may float up through the chimney causing fires wherever they land (in the chimney, on the roof, in the yard).
3. Remove ashes by placing them in a container designed for holding them. Remember, ashes may look out, they can burn and retain heat for several days. When you dump them out, make sure it is away from flammable material.
4. When you hang the Christmas stockings by the fireplace, make sure they are out of the way of the heat from the fire.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

1. Decorate with flame retardant or non-combustible materials.
2. Do not leave candles burning unattended or in reach of children.
3. Ensure candles are away from combustible materials and never use candles to decorate a Christmas tree.
4. Christmas wrapping paper can be highly combustible and should be kept away from heat sources.
5. Do not overload electrical circuits or extension cords.
6. Check the batteries in your smoke detectors and replace if necessary.
7. Always turn Christmas lights off before you leave home or go to sleep.
8. Cars loaded with gifts in a parking lot can become easy targets for thieves. Make sure you lock vehicle and keep packages out of sight, such as locked in the trunk. Park in a well lit, heavily travelled area. Never leave keys in the vehicle.
9. Have a designated driver for holiday parties.

SAFETY GIFT IDEAS: smoke detector and batteries, fire extinguisher, flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, carbon monoxide detector, mobile phone, second floor escape ladder, snow chains.