



Christmas Holiday Safety

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The Camas-Washougal Fire Marshal's Office encourages all of our citizens to use extra precaution and follow the safety tips below to ensure a safe and happy Christmas celebration.

Christmas Trees - Selection, Care and Disposal

- To select a fresh tree, check the needles; they should be green and hard to pull back from the branches. If needles fall off easily the tree has dried out and it is a fire hazard.
- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent and keep the tree stand filled with water.
- When disposing of your tree never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Holiday Lights

- Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed and/or exposed wires and excessive kinking before putting them up.
- Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe.
- Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- If possible, invest in LED lights which produce less heat (and are therefore safer).

Holiday Decorations

- All decorations should be nonflammable or flame retardant and placed away from heat sources.
- Never put wrapping paper in the fireplace - when it burns it can throw off dangerous sparks and encourage roof fires.

Holiday Safety Tips - Around the Home

- If you use candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down or accessed by children. Battery operated candles are a safe alternative.
- Never leave the house or go to sleep with candles burning.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.
- Be mindful in the kitchen. Don't leave your cooking unattended.
- Test your smoke alarms and make sure they are functioning properly.

The International Fire Code (IFC) and Holiday Safety

For further information regarding decorative vegetation and open flames, please see:

- [IFC 308](#)
- [IFC 806](#)
- [IFC 806 \(Washington State amendment to the 2015 IFC effective July 1st, 2016.\)](#)