

Holiday Decor and Fire Safety

I. EGRESS

A. Access to exits and exit paths shall not be obstructed by decorative materials.

II. SOURCES OF IGNITION

A. Candles or other sources of open flame are not allowed for any decorations or ceremonies, except as approved by the fire authority prior to the event.

B. Sources of ignition shall not be allowed within the vicinity of combustible decorative materials.

III. ELECTRICAL

A. Only UL listed miniature lights shall be used, in accordance with their listing.

B. Heavy duty extension cords shall be approved commercially manufactured UL listed assemblies (14-gauge minimum, 15-amp minimum). Only grounded extension cords shall be used.

C. Electrical lights and extension cords that are physically damaged or altered shall not be used unless repairs are in accordance with the Electrical Code.

IV. DECORATIVE MATERIALS

A. Natural vegetation, including cut Christmas trees

1. Fire-retardant coatings are not required on natural trees and will not extend the length of time a tree should be permitted indoors. While freshly cut trees are naturally flame resistant due to their high water content, they become extremely flammable when permitted to dry out. When brought indoors, the heat and lower humidity will accelerate the drying process.

Care of Christmas trees shall be as follows:

- Saw off at an angle at least 1/2 inch above the original cut.
 - Mount securely in a tree stand, pail, tub, or other water-type holder or reservoir.
 - Maintain the water level above the cut as long as the tree is indoors and add fresh water daily.
2. Decorations made of natural materials shall be removed at any indication of dryness, such as brittleness, loss of color, or fallen needles. Christmas trees and

other natural holiday decorations shall be removed if the building is unoccupied for more than three (3) days.

B. Artificial Decorations

1. Artificial decorations may have electrical devices used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Exception: Artificial decorations having exposed metal surfaces shall not be decorated with any type of electrical devices, decorations or appliances.

C. All decorations shall be either inherently fire retardant or treated with a flame retardant to be flame resistant and shall comply with O.F.C. 805 (2004 Edition).

V. OCCUPANCY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Assemblies - Assembly buildings or rooms shall not exceed the posted occupancy load or as approved by the fire authority.

B. Schools - Decorations, including student-generated materials, shall not exceed 20% of the wall and 10% of the door surface at any time of the year.

C. Health Care, Residential Care and Assisted Living Facilities.

1. Natural trees shall be placed under a sprinkler head.

2. Christmas trees shall not be in patient rooms.

Exceptions: 1. A live Christmas tree is not to exceed 24 inches in height, including pot. Pot not to exceed 9 inches in diameter.

2. An imitation tree of non-combustible material is not to exceed 24 inches in height.

3. No electrical decorations are allowed on Christmas trees in patient rooms.

Exception: Battery operated, listed mini lights may be used with the approval of the chief engineer or facility manager.

4. Decoration material shall not cover more than 20% of walls and 10% of doors.

5. Rated, listed mini lights may be used around the inner framing of an outside wall window with the approval of the chief engineer or facility manager.

D. Foster Care Homes - Christmas trees shall not be in sleeping rooms.

E. Contact the local fire authority for temporary membrane structures, tents and canopies, haunted houses, outdoor carnivals, fairs and other places of assembly.

F. Contact the local fire authority for fireworks displays. Contact the Office of State Fire Marshal for required permits.

G. Jails and Correctional Facilities

1. At the Institution's discretion, for security purposes, follow the same guidelines as Occupancy Specific Guidelines (C) above.
2. In addition, natural trees shall be placed under a sprinkler head. If the facility is not sprinkled, natural trees shall be placed under a smoke or heat detector.