



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

December 16, 2013



Christmas Holiday  
Safety Tips



Harvest time is virtually complete, and this year has come and gone faster than we want to admit or even realize. The Christmas holiday season will soon be upon us. We need to get prepared mentally and physically to enjoy family and friends, the spiritual events and other celebrations that go with this special time of the year. It's imperative that we remember that this is the time of the year for the birth of our Savior.

## FACTS FROM THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC)-

- ✓ Every year emergency rooms treat about 12,000 people with injuries from falls, cuts and shocks from holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees.
- ✓ Candles start about 11,600 fires, resulting in 150 deaths, 1,200 injuries and \$173 million dollars in property losses.
- ✓ Christmas trees alone are involved in about 300 fires, resulting in 10 deaths, 20 injuries and an average of \$10 million dollars in property damages.

**Following are some tips that, if you heed them, will assure you of more enjoyable Christmas activities and safer ones as well:**

### BEWARE OF HOLIDAY LIGHTS & CANDLES-

- Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials.
- Do not leave children in a room with lit candles.
- Keep candles, matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees and refrain from using them at parties.
- Do not use lighted candles in windows.

### TEST TREE TRIMMINGS-

- If you decorate with lights – be sure to buy the type that has been tested by an approved laboratory.
- For outside decorations – be sure to use lights that are designed and approved for outdoor use.
- Do not over load electrical outlets – always unplug all your lights when you leave the home and when you go to bed.
- Do not use electric lights on a metal tree.

### KEEP LIVE CHRISTMAS TREES FRESH-

- Choose a fresh tree and secure it in a sturdy stand.
- Locate the tree away from heat sources and water it daily.
- If you buy an artificial tree, make sure that it is flame-retardant.

### PREPARE FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES-

- Decorate with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.
- If smoking is allowed, be sure to have plenty of ashtrays sitting around and check them frequently.
- After the party, check the upholstered furniture, cushions, and ashtrays for smoldering butts.

### DESIGNATE A DRIVER-

- If you are a party attendant- select a non-drinking driver.
- If you are the host- be sure to have non-alcoholic beverages for the non-drinking drivers.

### INSPECT FIREPLACES-

- Fireplaces should be cleaned and inspected each year before the heating season starts. Creosote forms as wood burns, creating a buildup in the chimney walls that will cause a fire if they aren't properly cleaned.
- Always protect your home and family by using a sturdy screen in front of the fireplace.
- You should always burn wood and no paper or brush limbs which can have particles floating out of the chimney and possible igniting a fire in yours or your neighbors' yard.
- Never use flammable liquids in the fireplace.
- If you buy a factory built fireplace, buy one that has been tested by an approved laboratory. Be sure that the installation meets local standards.
- If you hang stockings on the mantel piece, don't start a fire in the fireplace.

### BE CAREFUL WITH PORTABLE AND SPACE HEATERS-

- Be sure that your wood or coal burning stove is an approved model from a reputable manufacturer.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper use and maintenance.
- Locate your wood heater 1 meter (3 feet) from any combustible materials such as wallpaper, beddings, pets and people.
- Never leave space heaters unattended or leave children in the room where space heaters are used.
- Never dry garments or gloves by laying them on the heaters.
- Be sure to have a flame-retardant floor pad under the heater to protect the floor.

### HOLIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY-

- ✓ When possible, do your shopping in daylight hours.
- ✓ Avoid wearing expensive jewelry when you're on shopping sprees.
- ✓ Refrain from carrying a purse or wallet. If you do avoid large sums of cash. Use debit and credit cards as much as possible. These are prime targets for criminals in shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops and other means of rapid transportation.
- ✓ Park in well-lit and well-traveled parking areas.
- ✓ When you're doing night shopping, it's a good idea to have a "shopping buddy" with you.
- ✓ When you return to your car- look in the front and back before opening the doors to be sure that a stranger isn't inside lurking around for you.
- ✓ If you return to your car and a stranger is hanging around- return to the store or shopping area and ask a security officer to escort you back to your vehicle or wait until he leaves to return.
- ✓ Be cognizant of vans or wagons parked by your vehicle- these are used by criminals to abduct innocent females.

### *THE BEST GIFTS AROUND*

*ANY CHRISTMAS TREE* \*\*  \*\*  
*THE PRESENCE OF A HAPPY FAMILY*  
*ALL WRAPPED UP IN EACH OTHER*