



MAFES Dawg Tracks

December 1, 2014



Safety Tips:
Holiday Safety



Harvest time is virtually complete. As we have said every year lately this year is almost gone. How did it come and go in a flash? The Christmas season is upon us, so it is again time to get prepared mentally and physically for family and friendly relationships, spiritual events and other celebrations that occur at this time of the year. Remembering that the birth of our Savior is the reason for the season.

FACTS FROM THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION-

- ✓ Every year hospital emergency rooms treat about 12,500 people with injuries from falls, cuts and shocks from holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees.
- ✓ Candles start about 11,500 fires, resulting in 150 deaths, 1,200 injuries and \$173 million in property losses.
- ✓ Christmas trees alone are involved in about 300 fires, resulting in 10 deaths, 30 injuries and an average of \$10 million in property losses.

Following are some tips that will make our season more enjoyable and get us home safely at night:

BEWARE OF HOLIDAY LIGHTS-

- ✓ Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials.
- ✓ Do not leave children alone in rooms with lit candles.
- ✓ Keep candles, matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees and avoid using them at parties.
- ✓ Do not use lighted candles in windows and use non-flammable candle holders.

TEST TREE TRIMMINGS-

- ✓ If you decorate with lights- be sure to buy lights that have been approved by a certified laboratory, like Underwriters' laboratories (UL).
- ✓ For outside decorations- be sure to use lights approved for outdoor use.
- ✓ Do not overload electrical outlets- always unplug the lights when you leave home or go to bed each night.
- ✓ Do not use electric lights in a metal tree.

KEEP LIVE CHRISTMAS TREES FRESH-

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

PREPARE FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES-

- ✓ Decorate with flame-retardant materials.
- ✓ If smoking is allowed, be sure to provide ample amounts of ashtrays- check them regularly.
- ✓ After the party, check your upholstery, furniture and cushions for smoldering butts.

DESIGNATE A DRIVER-

- ✓ If you are a party attendant- select a non-drinking driver and provide non-alcoholic beverages for the non-drinking drivers.

INSPECT FIREPLACES-

- ✓ Fireplaces should be cleaned and inspected each year in advance of the cold season. Creosote forms as wood burns, causing a buildup and will start a fire if not properly cleaned.
- ✓ Always use a sturdy fireplace screen that will protect your home and family when burning the fireplace.
- ✓ Always burn wood. Refrain from using paper or pine limbs that could have flying particles floating out of the chimney and possibly starting a fire on your neighbor's property.
- ✓ Never use flammable liquids in the fireplace.
- ✓ If you buy a factory built fireplace, be sure that it is approved by a certified laboratory and is installed according to 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 model is approved by a certified laboratory.
- ✓ Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper use and maintenance.
- ✓ Locate your wood heater 1 meter (39 inches) from any combustible materials including bedding, pets and people.
- ✓ Never leave space heaters unattended or leave children in a room with a space heater.
- ✓ Never dry garments or gloves by laying them on a space heater.
- ✓ Be sure to keep a flame-retardant pad or rug under a space heater to protect the floor.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY-

- ✓ When it's possible, do your Christmas shopping during the daylight hours.
- ✓ Avoid wearing your expensive jewelry during your shopping sprees.
- ✓ Refrain from carrying a purse or wallet; also avoid carrying large sums of cash. Use debit or credit cards for your purchases. These are prime target for thieves in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops and other means of rapid transportation.
- ✓ Park in well-lit and well-traveled parking areas.
- ✓ When you're out night shopping, have a "buddy" shop with you. It's safer than being single.
- ✓ When you return to your vehicle, look inside the front and back areas to be sure that there are no strangers lurking around.
- ✓ If you start to your vehicle and you see a stranger around the vehicle, return to the shop or mall and ask a security officer to accompany you to your vehicle.
- ✓ Be aware of vans or wagons parked around your vehicle. These are used by criminals to abduct innocent victims.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt... / Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES / MSU-ES (662) 566-2201 7/9/2014

Excerpts: www.ou.edu/oupd/
<http://usgov.info.about.com>

THE BEST GIFTS AROUND ANY CHRISTMAS TREE:



**THE PRESENCE OF A HAPPY FAMILY ALL
WRAPPED AROUND EACH OTHER**