



Humboldt Bay Fire News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject : Put Fire Safety at the top of your Holiday To-Do List!

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The candles, lights, and trees that help make our many of our holidays feel festive also come with some increased fire risk. Please remember to think of safety in all of your holiday activities. Humboldt Bay Fire and the National Fire Protection Association recommend the following tips to make your Holidays safer.

Candles & Lights:

U.S. fire departments respond to an estimated 7,610 home structure fires started by candles each year. These fires cause an annual average of 81 deaths, 677 injuries and \$278 million in direct property damage. To use candles safely and responsibly:

- Consider using flameless candles.
- Place candles in sturdy, non-combustible containers.
- Keep candles well away from decorations and other combustible materials.
- Check candles frequently to make sure they have not burned down too far.
- Never leave children unattended in a room with lit candles.
- Never use lit candles to decorate Christmas trees.

- Do not overload electrical systems with holiday lighting.
- Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

Tree & Fire Safety:

Christmas trees can be a significant fire hazard if not properly selected, installed, maintained, and disposed of. Every year. U.S. Christmas trees account for 250 fires annually, resulting in 14 deaths, 26 injuries and more than \$13.8 million in property damage.

The most important thing you can do to keep your tree safe is to keep it watered and green. A dry tree ignites easily and grows rapidly. On the other hand, a well-watered tree is much harder to ignite and has limited fire growth.

When you bring your tree home, cut off an inch of trunk at the base and place the tree in a sturdy stand that covers the base by at least 2 inches of water.

The most common causes of Christmas tree fires are shorts in electrical lights and extension cords or open flames from candles, lighters or matches. Use proper size extension cords, inspect light strings and extension cords and throw them out if they are damaged, and follow the manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strings that can be strung together.

Never use candles or open flames on or near Christmas trees or decorative vegetation.

Recycle your tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Never burn trees in fireplaces or wood stoves. Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

For more information on any of these recommendations, please give us a call at 707-441-4000 and have a wonderful holiday season.

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