

OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

Winter Fire Safety Guidelines

Winter holidays are a time for family and friends to get together, but as the temperatures drop and we turn up the heat in our homes that also means a greater risk for fire. The following are a few simple tips designed to insure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

- Install new batteries annually and test your smoke alarms monthly (**a fire can double in size every 30 seconds**)
- Sit as family to plan and discuss what to do when a smoke alarm activates
- Have your heater serviced by a licensed professional
- Chimneys, fireplaces and wood burning inserts need to be inspected and serviced by a licensed technician and chimney sweep

Turkey Fryer Safety

- Never leave the fryer unattended
- Keep children and pets away from the fryer at all times
- Eye protection and grill mitts are a must
- Defrost the turkey COMPLETELY and DRY IT prior to frying
- Have a grease-related fire extinguisher close by
- Do not overfill the fryer
- Turn the burner off prior to lowering the turkey, once inserted turn the burner back on
- Fryers should be used outdoors away from combustible structures and that means off the wooden deck too!

Home Decorating & Holiday Entertaining

- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant
- Candles are open flames and DANGEROUS, look to substitute them with battery powered candles
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both
- Inspect your lights for worn or broken cords and plugs



- If bringing a live Christmas tree into your home, insure it's fresh
- Keep the tree away from heat sources like heating vents, fireplaces and radiators
- Be sure that the tree constantly has fresh water
- When you leave home, or go to bed, be sure to turn off all indoor and outdoor Christmas lights and electrical decorations
- If hanging stockings on the fireplace mantle do not light the fireplace
- Do not overload your electrical outlets and limit the use of extension cords
- Never leave pots or pans unattended when cooking
- Keep small children and pets away from the stove and range when in use

Fires are moving faster! Evolutions in materials for home furnishings, incorporating more open space layouts and lightweight construction materials allow fires to spread much faster. Forty years ago, a person had about 17 minutes to escape a burning home, today you may have less than 3 minutes!

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