



MAFES Dawg Tracks

December, 2013



**Christmas Holiday
Safety Tips**



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

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 11,600 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 if, we heed them, will allow us to enjoy the activities and arrive home in the same state as we left:

BEWARE OF HOLIDAY LIGHTS-

- ✓ Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials.
- ✓ Do not leave children in rooms alone 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.

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 – use only lights labeled for outside use.
- Do not overload electrical outlets – always unplug all your lights when you leave 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 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 fire-retardant.

PREPARE FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES-

- Decorate with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials. Avoid using candles at parties.
- If smoking is allowed, be sure to supply a sufficient number of ashtrays and check them regularly.
- After the party, check your upholstery, 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- you should have non-alcoholic beverages for the non-drinking drivers.

INSPECT FIREPLACES-

- ✓ Fireplaces should be cleaned and inspected each year before the heating season sets in. Creosote forms as wood burns, creating a buildup in the chimney walls that will cause a fire if not properly cleaned.
- ✓ Always protect your home and family by using a sturdy screen when burning fires.
- ✓ You should always burn wood and no paper or pine limbs which can have particles floating out of the chimney and could ignite your neighbor's yard.
- ✓ Never use flammable liquids in the fireplace.
- ✓ If you buy a factory built fireplace, buy one that has been approved by a reputable 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 laboratory.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the proper maintenance and use.
- Locate your wood heater 1 meter (93 feet) from any combustibles including wallpaper, bedding, 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 underneath the space heaters to protect the floor.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY-

- ✓ Whenever possible, do your holiday shopping during the daylight hours.
- ✓ Avoid wearing expensive jewelry during your shopping sprees.
- ✓ Refrain from carrying a purse or wallet, and if so, avoid large sums of cash. Use debit or credit cards for purchases. These are prime targets for thieves in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops and other means of rapid transportation.
- ✓ Park in well-lit parking areas that are well traveled.
- ✓ When you're doing night shopping it's better to have a "buddy" along.
- ✓ When you return to your car from shopping, look inside the front and back areas before opening the door to be sure that there are no strangers hanging around your car.
- ✓ If you start to your vehicle and you see a stranger around it, return to the shop and ask for a security officer to accompany you or wait until the stranger leaves the area to go to your vehicle.
- ✓ Be aware of vans or wagons that might be parked close to you. These are used by criminals to abduct an innocent person.

THE BEST GIFTS AROUND ANY



CHRISTMAS TREE:
THE PRESENCE OF A HAPPY FAMILY
ALL WRAPPED UP IN EACH OTHER

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