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HCS Staff Wellness Newsletter



Prevent House Fires This Christmas!

The holiday season brings many fire hazards, all of which are preventable. Follow these tips to prevent house fires this holiday season:

- When purchasing a Christmas tree, tap the tree trunk against the ground. If a large quantity of pine needles fall off, the tree has dried out, posing a fire hazard.
- When bringing a live Christmas tree home, make a fresh cut on the tree trunk. This will enable the Christmas tree to 'drink water' more effectively.
- Keep the live Christmas tree in a sturdy tree stand, with plenty of water at all times. Check the water level daily.
- Monitor the condition of the Christmas tree, especially during the latter part of December. Once the pine needles start to fall off easily, the tree has dried out, posing a huge fire risk.
- Do not place Christmas trees or any other combustible items near a fireplace or space heater.
- If purchasing an artificial Christmas tree, only purchase a tree that is fire retardant.
- When purchasing Christmas lights and electric holiday decorations, only purchase items with a UL (Underwriters Laboratories) sticker, seal, or logo. A UL sticker or logo on holiday decorations and Christmas lights indicates that the item has passed rigorous quality control testing and safety testing.
- Before putting Christmas lights up on the tree or on the house, check the cord for evidence of fraying, chew marks, melting or any other damage. Wire damage is a prime cause of electrical fires.
- When using strings of Christmas lights, check each and every Christmas light to ensure that the bulb is sitting properly in the socket.
- Limit the use of electrical cords and avoid using electrical socket adapters that create room for additional plugs. This poses a serious fire hazard.
- Unplug the Christmas tree lights, electrical holiday ornaments and outdoor Christmas lights when not in use. Before plugging them back in, inspect the cord and plug for signs of damage.
- Do not leave Christmas lights or other decorations plugged in when there is no one home.
- Use only outdoor or indoor/outdoor Christmas lights on the exterior of the home.
- Check that all smoke detectors are operational (and carbon monoxide detectors) with new batteries.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on each floor of the home as a preventive measure.
- Limit the use of candles.

