



For many of us, the holiday season means cooking, decorating, entertaining and celebrating. Follow these tips from the Office of the Fire Commissioner to ensure your family and friends have a fun, safe holiday season.

Tree Safety

- Pick a tree with fresh, green needles and keep it moist by watering daily
- Make sure it is at least three feet away from lights, fireplaces, heat vents or candles
- When lighting the tree, use lights that have been tested and approved by a recognized facility
- Always replace strings of lights that are worn out, have broken cords or loose bulb connections
- Always turn off tree lights before leaving home or going to bed

When Decorating

- Always choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant
- Consider energy efficient LED lighting which produce less heat and therefore reduce fire risk
- Check whether lights are for indoor or outdoor use; many are not for both
- Use clips to hang lights, never staples or nails
- Do not overload outlets, always check amperage of electrical devices
- Always ensure decorations including trees do not block exits

Cooking Safety

- Keep anything that could be flammable (oven mitts, food packaging) away from the stovetop
- Always stay in the kitchen while food is cooking and use timers to remind yourself when you are simmering, baking or roasting
- Be alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, do not cook
- When cooking with kids at home, have a “kid-free zone” around the stove and other preparation areas

After the Holiday Season

- Be sure to dispose of your tree when it is dry. Dry trees are a fire hazard and should not be stored in or around your house
- Bring outdoor lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and to help them last longer

When Entertaining

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about exit routes
- Keep matches and lighters in a high, locked cabinet
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles
- Always be candle smart! Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed
- December is the peak time of year for home candle fires



The information provided in this fact sheet is adapted from NFPA Public Education Division Safety Tips.