Safe and Sound Holidays

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over $930 million in damage. There are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday.

Winter Holidays
According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Christmas trees are involved in about 400 fires annually, resulting in 20 deaths, 70 injuries and an average of more than $15 million in property loss and damage. To ensure your happy holidays don’t turn into tragedy you need to follow a few extra fire safety precautions. The following information will help you make certain your celebrations are fire safe.

Candles
Candles can help create a festive atmosphere to your celebrations but they can also cause great damage if not used safely. December is the peak month for candle fires. Always put candles in candlesticks before you light them. Don’t use lit candles as decorations on your Christmas tree or near flammable decorations and curtains. Never leave candles unattended or within the reach of young children. Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.

Electricity
Cords and plugs are the leading type of equipment involved in the ignition of Christmas trees. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions on how to use tree lights. Any string lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulbs should not be used. Always unplug tree lights before leaving home or going to sleep.

Christmas Trees
Trees are an important decoration for many holiday celebrations. Keep your tree away from fireplaces, portable and baseboard heaters. Try to keep fresh-cut trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water each day. Dispose of fresh-cut trees before becoming dry to the extent that needles are falling and the color is fading. Contact your garbage disposal service to learn the details of their holiday tree removal program.

Cooking
Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking for holiday visitors, remember to keep an eye on the range. If you must leave the kitchen while preparing food, set a timer or carry a pot holder to remind you that food is cooking.

For More Information Contact:
Tacoma Fire Department
Public Education Office
253.591.5740
www.tacomafiredepartment.org