



Santa Clara County Fire Department

Live Christmas Tree Fire video clips, Comparison of fresh vs. dry trees:

- National Institute of Standards and Technology: http://www.fire.nist.gov/tree_fire.htm

Santa Clara County Fire Retardant Live Trees and Fire Retardant Fabrics facilities list:



[Fire Retardant Treatment Facilities - 2008](#) [pdf; 16k]

Holiday Safety Tips

Trees

- Keep your tree away from fireplaces, wood burning stoves, portable heaters or other sources of heat.
- Place the tree in an area where it will not block your escape path in the event of an emergency.



Fresh Trees

- Choose a fresh tree. Do not buy a tree with shedding needles.
- Before mounting your tree in a sturdy stand, cut 1" from the trunk and immediately submerge in water. This keeps sap from clogging water flow.
- Fill tree stand with water daily (or more often as needed) so the tree does not dry out. The average 6-foot tree has a 4-inch diameter trunk and can consume as much as 1 gallon of water per day.



Artificial Trees

- Be sure that plastic trees have the UL Label, and that they are labeled as flame retardant.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.



Lights

- Use only lights that have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) label.
- Carefully inspect each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections. Discard any damaged light sets.
- Check packaging to determine the maximum number of strings that may be connected together.
- Use only extension cords that have a built-in circuit breaker.
- Do not run cords under throw rugs or carpets.
- Check labels on lights before using them outdoors. Never use indoor lights outside.
- Always unplug lights before you go to bed or leave the house.



Candles, Matches and Lighters

- Never use burning candles on your tree or as part of wreaths.
- Keep candles away from decorations, drapes, furniture and other combustibles.
- Use sturdy, non-combustible candleholders that can collect dripping wax and won't tip over.
- Purchase only child-resistant lighters.
- Always keep matches, lighters and candles out of the reach of children, and don't leave children unattended in a room with lit candles. Teach young children to bring matches and lighters to an adult.
- Always extinguish candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.



Fireplaces, Wood Stoves and Heating Equipment

- Have your chimney and vents inspected annually before burning fire in the fireplace.
- Keep all combustible materials away from fireplaces and wood stoves. Keep portable heaters a minimum of 3 feet from furniture, drapes, blankets and other combustibles.
- Install a spark arrester with a 1/2" mesh screen on chimney or stovepipe outlets to prevent flying embers from igniting a roof fire.
- Never use flammable liquids to start a fire.

- Use a screen to enclose the front of your fireplace to confine live embers and sparks. Keep Christmas stockings, holiday decorations, and furniture at a safe distance from fireplace.
- Never burn Christmas trees or wrapping paper in the fireplace or wood stove. Both burn very intensely and may cause a roof or chimney fire.
- Firelogs (such as duraflame) Usage and Safety Tips:
 - DO NOT use in wood stoves or BBQS.
 - DO NOT use for cooking.
 - Burn only ONE log at a time - the wax component of the product produces twice the BTU heat value per pound of wood, allowing one firelog to provide a fire equivalent to several pieces of wood. Burning more than one log at a time could result in too large or too hot of fire in your fireplace.
 - Position logs at the rear of the fireplace on an adequate supporting grate.
 - DO NOT use pokers or tongs to move firelogs. These logs are designed to burn in a controlled manner and do not require tending.
- Consider replacing your wood burning fireplace with a gas fireplace. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Wood Smoke Rebate Program opens **Tuesday, November 18, 2008, at 2:00 pm**. Rebates of \$200 will be offered to convert to gas fireplace inserts and stoves. For more information, visit: <http://www.sparetheair.org/>.



Holiday Parties and Smoking

Carelessness with smoking materials is the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States.

- Don't smoke near the tree or decorations.
- Have large ashtrays with center supports available for smokers.
- Check for cigarette butts in upholstered furniture before you go to bed.
- Wait until ashes are cool before disposing of them.



Be Prepared

- Install smoke alarms inside and outside all sleeping areas. Test alarms monthly and replace batteries annually.
- Install fire extinguishers where they are easily accessible. Train family members how and when to use fire extinguishers.
- Make a home escape plan with family members. Your plan should include two exits out of every room and a common meeting place outside. Practice your home escape plan.
- Teach family members that if a fire does occur to crawl low under smoke to make a safe escape.

- Teach all family members how to report an emergency by calling 911.



Holiday Gift Ideas

- Smoke alarms
- Fire extinguishers
- Escape ladders
- First aid kits
- Earthquake kits
- Flashlights
- Portable radios
- New batteries for smoke alarms, flashlights and portable radios



For a version of this page in a printable format, click: [Holiday Safety Tips](#). [pdf; 40k]

For additional safety information:

- Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA): www.csia.org
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC): www.cpsc.gov
- Duraflame, Inc.: http://www.duraflame.com/aa_faq/faq01.php#
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA): www.nfpa.org



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