

Deck the Halls with Holiday Safety

A message from the Santa Clara County Fire Department

Keep your family and your home safe from fire during the holidays.

Lights

- Carefully inspect each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections.
- Discard any damaged light sets.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.
- Do not use more than three sets of lights per single extension.
- Only use extension cords that have a metal casing with a built-in circuit breaker.
- Do not run cords under throw rugs or carpets.
- Never use indoor lights outside.
- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

Trees

- Keep the 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

- Do not purchase a tree with shedding needles.
- Before mounting the tree in a sturdy stand, cut 1" from the trunk and immediately submerge in water. This keeps sap from clogging water flow so the tree does not dry out.
- Keep plenty of water in the tree stand so the tree will not dry out.

Artificial Trees

- Be sure that plastic trees are labeled as flame retardant.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.

Candles, Matches, & Lighters

- Never use burning candles on a tree or wreaths.
- Keep candles away from decorations, drapes, furniture, and other combustibles.
- Always use non-flammable candleholders.
- Purchase only child-resistant lighters.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the hands of children.

Fireplaces, Wood Stoves, and Heating Equipment

- Keep all combustible materials away from fireplaces and wood stoves.
- Keep portable heaters a minimum of three feet from furniture, drapes, blankets, and other combustibles.
- Install a spark arrester with a 1/2" mesh screen on outlets for chimneys or stovepipes to prevent flying embers from igniting a roof fire.
- Use a screen to enclose the front of your fireplace to confine live embers and sparks.
- Never burn trees or wrapping paper in your fireplace or wood stove.