



A Season for Sharing in Fire Safety

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

Preventing Christmas Tree Fires

- **Christmas Tree Fire Hazards** - Movie segments demonstrate how fast a live Christmas tree can become fully engulfed in flames. Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.
- **Selecting a Tree for the Holiday**
Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.
- **Caring for Your Tree**
Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of Your Tree

- Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away. Marin Sanitary Service provides curbside Christmas tree recycling through Green Yard waste pick-up for the month of January. **Tree stands/bases must be removed. No flocked trees. No trees over six feet. For trees over 6' either cut in half or bring to our facility listed below.**
- **Fire Stations Accept Trees for Recycling - January 2nd through 14th 2008:**
Station 2 - 210 Third Street
Station 5 - 955 Point San Pedro Road
Station 7 - 3530 Civic Center Drive
Map to Stations: http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/Government/Fire/Fire_Station_Locations.htm
- **Other Locations**
Pickleweed Community Center (Canal Area)
Manuel T. Freitas Parkway & Del Ganado (Scotty's Market Parking Lot)
Marin Resource Recovery Center (During the entire month of January)
565 Jacoby Street San Rafael, CA 94901 415-485-564

Holiday Lights

- **Maintain Your Holiday Lights**
Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- **Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets**
Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect light of strings to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- **Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on Unattended**

Holiday Decorations

- **Use Only Non-flammable Decorations**
All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.
- **Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace**
It can throw off dangerous sparks and produce a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion.
- **Artificial Christmas Trees**
If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Candle Care

- **Avoid Using Lit Candles**
If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.
- **Never Put Lit Candles on a Tree**
Do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

As in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help. And remember to practice your home escape plan. **Source:** USFA www.usfa.dhs.gov

The members of the San Rafael Fire Department wish you a safe and healthy Christmas and New Year. Please contact the Office of the Fire Chief at Fire Station 1 (1039 C St.) for further information at (415) 485-3304; visit us on the internet at: www.sanrafaelfire.org, or stop by your neighborhood San Rafael Fire Station.

http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/Government/Fire/Fire_Station_Locations.htm

Our Mission...is to help!

***Fire Department Offices: 1039 C Street, San Rafael, CA 94901
Administration (415) 485-3304 Fax: (415) 453-1627***

***Fire Department Offices: 1039 C Street, San Rafael, CA 94901
Administration (415) 485-3304 Fax: (415) 453-1627***