



LACEY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

Making A Difference

COMMISSIONERS
John L. Christiansen
C.H. Skip Houser
K. Frank Kirkbride

CHIEF
James M. Broman

-PRESS RELEASE-

Date: December 9, 2009
Subject: Winter Holiday Safety
Contact: Tim Hulse, Battalion Chief
Release: For immediate release

The holiday season represents a time for family festivities and good cheer. What few of us consider is that the holiday season is a time when there is an increased risk of home fires. Many households engage in holiday activities that serve as some of the leading causes of U.S. home fires. Christmas trees, decorations, candle usage and colder weather significantly contribute to the seasonal increase in home fires. Fortunately, with a little added awareness and some minor adjustments to holiday cooking, decorating and heating, the season can remain safe and festive for everybody.

Cooking: Unattended cooking is the leading cause of U.S. home fires and home fire injuries. Most cooking fires involve the stovetop, so keep anything that can catch fire away from it, and turn off the stove when you leave the kitchen.

- **Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.**
- **Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop.**



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Candles: Candles are widely used in homes throughout the holidays, and December is the peak month for home candle fires. The National Fire Protection Association's statistics show that more than half of all candle fires start because the candles had been too close to things that could catch fire. On average, a candle fire in the home is reported to a U.S. fire department every 30 seconds.

- **Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep.**
- **Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn.**
- **Consider using flameless candles which look and smell like real candles.**

Holiday Decorating: Holiday decorations can contribute significantly to fire spread and can cause a small fire to grow quickly. Holiday lights, extension cords and other electrical items may pose potential safety hazards, especially if they are counterfeit or do not legitimately bear a recognized safety certification mark, such as the UL Mark (the letters "UL" inside a circle).

- **Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.**
- **Keep decorations away from windows and doors.**
- **Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.**
- **Make sure that your Christmas tree is at least three feet away from any heat source and not blocking an exit.**



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Home Heating: According to the National Fire Protection Association, nearly half of all home-heating fires occur during December, January and February with the top three occurrences for fires on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

- **Keep all things that can burn at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.**
- **Turn portable heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.**
- **Have your chimney inspected each year and cleaned if necessary.**
- **Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm in a central location outside of your sleeping area.**

Citizens with fire safety questions or concerns are encouraged to contact Fire district #3 for assistance at (360) 491-2410. Additional information can be found at District 3's website; www.laceyfire.com.



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