

A Message From the Safety Office

Fire safety, prevention tips for all

In 2011, Fire Safety / Fire Prevention Week is observed from Sunday to Saturday during the week where Oct. 9 falls, but fire safety is a year-round commitment. In addition, the winter holidays are right around the corner.

Each year fires during the holidays injure approximately 2,600 individuals and cause more than \$930 million in damage. Kitchen fires account for 41 percent of all residential fires, with cooking as the leading cause, followed by bedroom and heating system fires. During the winter holidays there is an increase in electrical and open flame fires, in large part due to the increase in use of electrical Christmas tree lights, decorations, and candles. According to the United States Fire Administration 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.

Holiday decorating and lighting - Live Christmas trees are only allowed in base housing. They are not allowed in other base facilities. Use caution with holiday decorations and whenever possible choose those made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant or non-combustible materials. Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials, and do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees. Do not leave burning candles unattended. Purchase only lights and electrical decorations bearing the name of an independent testing lab, and follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and maintenance. Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings and replace damaged items before plugging lights in. Do not overload extension cords. Check your strands of lights to determine the number of strands that may be connected. Connect no more than three strands of push-in bulbs and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Always unplug lights before replacing light bulbs or fuses. Do not mount lights in any way that can damage the cord's wire insulation (i.e., using staples, clips, or nails). Do not use electric lights on metallic trees; use only indirect off-the tree lighting with metallic trees. Use artificial tinsel and plastic ornaments to avoid shock hazards. Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving the house or going to bed.

Holiday Entertaining - Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking and visiting with a guest, remember to keep an eye on the stove. Wherever you



smoke, provide plenty of large, deep ashtrays and check them frequently. Cigarette butts can smolder in the trash and cause a fire, so completely douse cigarette butts with water before discarding. After a party, always check on, between and under upholstery, cushions, and inside trash cans for cigarette butts that may be smoldering. Keep matches and lighters up high, out of sight and reach of children (preferably in a locked cabinet). When smokers visit your home, ask them to keep their smoking materials out of reach of young children. Test your smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector and let guests know what your fire escape plan is.

For more information, contact the Safety Office at 609-754-1414. As a reminder, if you have any kind of an Emergency call 911 immediately for assistance.

