



LET'S TALK FIRE SAFETY

Valdosta Fire Department

Volume 4, Issue 12
December 2019

Winter Holiday Fire Safety

Winter Holiday Facts:

Between 2013-2017, U.S. fire departments responded to a yearly average of 160 home fires that started with Christmas trees. An estimated average of 780 home fires began with decorations, excluding Christmas trees.

These fires caused an annual average of three civilian fire deaths, 34 civilian fire injuries and \$12 million in direct property damage.

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in more than two of every five (44%) home Christmas tree fires.

In 25% of the Christmas tree fires, some type of heat source, such as a candle or equipment, was too close to the tree.

One-fifth (21%) of Christmas tree fires were intentional.

Cooking equipment was involved in one of every five (19%) of home decoration fires. This can happen when a decoration is left on or too close to a stove or other cooking equipment.

Safety Tips

- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn. Never use lit candles to decorate a tree.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Do not place trees in

front of exit doors blocking your escape in the event of an emergency.

- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk and place the tree at least three feet away from any heat source.
- Add water to the tree stand daily.

U.S. Fire Administration-USFA

https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Safety-tip-sheets/Winter_Holiday_Safety.pdf

Unscramble the Christmas Words

1. Ansat uacsl
2. Eihsgl
3. Tawehr
4. Cgnisotk
5. Deireren
6. Nyadc ecna
7. Pdorlhu
8. Erte
9. Sible
10. Cbmreddee

Answers to last month's wuzzles are back on one's feet and burn the midnight oil.

Fire Safety Quiz

1. It is ok to use Christmas lights either indoors or outdoors no matter what the manufacturer recommends.
 - A. True
 - B. False
2. Although Christmas tree fires are not very common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be _____.
 - A. minor
 - B. average
 - C. serious
 - D. none of the above

Answers to last month's quiz are 1. A. & 2. B.

Alabama was the first state in the United States to officially recognize Christmas in 1836.

Oklahoma was the last U.S. state to declare Christmas a legal holiday, in 1907.

Christmas wasn't declared an official holiday in the United States until June 26, 1870.

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire hazard and should not be left in the home, garage, or placed outside leaning against the house.

Keep Valdosta-Lowndes Beautiful will hold this holiday season's "Bring One for the Chipper" event on Saturday, January 4th between 9:00 am & 2:00 pm at Home Depot, Mathis Auditorium, & Walmart (Inner Perimeter) where free tree seedlings will be given out. Trees can be dropped off at these sites beginning December 26th – January 3rd excluding seedlings.

Have a fire safety question you would like for the Fire Department to answer? Please contact Ms. Tangela Rowe at 229-333-1835 or you can send an email to: valdostafire@valdostacity.com



Brian S. Boutwell, Fire Chief