

Holiday Season Fire Prevention

Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen, along with State Fire Marshal Tina R. Virgil, would like to remind Wisconsin citizens to take extra care to be safe during the Holiday Season. Holiday trees, lights, and decorations are all a festive part of the season, but if not handled properly, can pose serious fire hazards. Please keep in mind the following tips as you celebrate the season.

Holiday Trees: When choosing a tree, find one with fresh needles that are hard to pull back from the branches. Identifying old trees is as simple as bouncing the tree trunk off the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has dried out and is likely a fire hazard. Once you've gotten the tree home, avoid placing it near a heat source such as a fireplace or heater vent. Be sure to keep the tree stand filled with water. Finally, when the season comes to a close, be sure to dispose of your tree properly by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by the community pick-up service.

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. Avoid overloading electrical outlets. Linking more than three strands of lights is not recommended. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet, and periodically check the wires to make sure that they are not warm to the touch.

Candles and other Holiday Decorations: Consider using battery operated flameless candles. These flameless candles often look, smell, and feel like traditional candles. If you choose to use traditional candles, be sure to use sturdy safe candleholders with glass chimneys or containers. Always keep candles at least 12 inches away from any flammable material, and never leave candles unattended

Holiday Decorations: Remember to use only decorations that are nonflammable or flame-retardant.

Keeping safety at the forefront of this Holiday Season will ensure a joyous time for all Wisconsin citizens. For more information on fire safety, go to <http://www.nfpa.org>.

Source: Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen, along with State Fire Marshal Tina R. Virgil,

<http://www.doj.state.wi.us/absolutenm/anmviewer.asp?a=1648&z=9>