

# Winter Holiday Safety

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following a few simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

## HOLIDAY DECORATING

- » Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- » Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- » Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- » Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini light sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- » Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- » Keep decorations away from windows and doors.

## HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

- » Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- » Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- » Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- » Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- » Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- » Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.



## Before Heading Out or to Bed

**Blow out** lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed. **Turn off** all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

## FACTS

- ! **Two of every five** home decoration fires are started by candles.
- ! **Nearly half** of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.



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# Wood & Pellet Stove Safety

As the temperature drops outside, wood and pellet stoves may be fired up inside the home. What you may not realize is that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires during the winter months.

- »» Have a QUALIFIED professional install stoves, chimney connectors, and chimneys.
- »» Stoves should have the LABEL of an independent testing laboratory.
- »» In wood stoves, burn only DRY, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.
- »» Have your chimney and stove INSPECTED and cleaned by a certified chimney sweep every fall just before heating season.
- »» CLEAN the inside of your stove periodically using a wire brush.
- »» Allow ashes to COOL before disposing of them. Place ashes in a covered metal container. Keep the container at least 10 feet away from the home and other buildings.
- »» Keep a CLOSE EYE on children whenever a wood or pellet stove is being used. Remind them to stay at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- »» Stoves need SPACE. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- »» INSTALL and maintain **carbon monoxide alarms** (CO) outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect the CO alarms. When one sounds, they all sound.

## SMOKE ALARM SENSE

Install and maintain smoke alarms on EVERY level of your home, outside each sleeping area and inside each bedroom. For the best protection, interconnect the alarms. When one sounds, they all sound. TEST all smoke alarms at least monthly.



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