



The Office of Fire Safety and Injury Prevention Education

8501 Veterans Highway Millersville, MD 21108 410-222-8303

www.aacounty.org

Fire Safe Holidays Fire Safety Tips

Preventing Christmas Tree Fires

Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.

Selecting A Tree For The Holiday

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut to long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

Caring For Your Tree

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flames or sparks. Do not put your live tree up to early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.



Disposing Of Your Tree

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove.

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. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.



Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Make sure you periodically check the wires—they should not be warm to the touch.



Never Put Wrapping Paper In A Fireplace

Keep fireplace fires small, and use a fireplace screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Do not leave children alone in a room with a fireplace fire. Never burn trash of wrapping paper in a fireplace. Burning paper can float up your chimney and onto your roof or into your yard.

As in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries. And remember to practice your home escape plan.

Fact Sheet