



Indoor Christmas Trees & Fire Prevention

The Enumclaw Fire Department wants to remind our community to be fire safe with your holiday decorations, especially Christmas trees. Improper care and decoration of a live or artificial tree can lead to a catastrophic fire. "It takes only seconds for a tree to ignite and the entire room to become engulfed in flames," says Chief Joe Clow.

Christmas Tree Safety Tips:

Caring for your freshly cut tree –

- Select the freshest looking tree available. Very few needles should fall from the tree when you either shake or bounce the tree on its stump or gently grasp a branch between your thumb and forefinger and pull it toward you.
- Water the tree daily, keeping the stand full of water at all times. Make a fresh cut off the bottom of the trunk approximately 1" from the bottom just before putting it in the stand. The stand should hold at least one quart of water for every inch diameter of the trunk.

Protect your tree from fire hazards –

- Place the tree well away from heat sources including space heaters, fireplaces, wood stoves, televisions and computers. These items will speed up moisture loss of the tree.
- Always use safe tree lights designed for indoor use. Larger tree lights should also have some type of reflector rather than a bare bulb and all lights should be UL listed.
- Make sure any artificial trees are labeled as fire-retardant. Never use electric lights on a metal tree.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use tree lights. Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used.
- Always unplug tree lights before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree.
- Safely dispose of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

Be prepared –

- Residential fire sprinklers offer the best protection to ensure escape from a fire.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas.
- Make **and practice** a home escape plan. Be sure to have two ways out of every room and decide on a designated meeting place outside.
- Get Out and Stay Out!! Go directly to your planned meeting place and stay there. Call the fire department from a neighbor's home or a cell phone once safely outside.
- Crawl low in smoke. If you are trapped in smoke, get down on your hands and knees and crawl to the nearest safe way out.
- Stop, Drop and Roll if your clothes catch on fire.