

MEMO

Date: December 04, 2012
To: VCH Departments and Staff
From: Lower Mainland Health Emergency Management (LMHEM) – Fire Safety Management

FIRE SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

While the holiday season is a wonderful time of year, the introduction of Christmas trees, holiday lighting, and decorations into health care facilities increases the potential for fire ignition and the fuel for it to burn.

When decorating your department or work area, please adhere to the following guidelines:

Christmas Trees

- Only install artificial Christmas trees, live trees will dry over time and can constitute a serious fire hazard.
- When selecting an artificial tree ensure that it is made from fire resistant materials. Look for a statement specifying this protection on the packaging.
- Ensure trees do not impede exits, traffic routes, fire safety equipment (pull stations, fire extinguishers, etc...), or electrical panels.

Holiday Lights

- Candles and open flames are not permitted, use battery operated candles instead.
- Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings. Discard any damaged products.
- Use only light strings bearing a ULC or CSA approval stamp.
- LED lights are the preferred lighting choice as they produce little heat, are more efficient, and last longer.
- Read and follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not overload extension cords. A maximum of 3 light strings can be connected to a single extension cord unless otherwise stated on the manufacturer's instructions.
- Inspect extension cords before use for signs of damage; ensure they are not run under carpets or in areas where they may experience wear.

Decorations

- Whenever possible, choose decorations that are non-combustible or fire resistant.
- Do not hang decorations on or near fire detection devices (sprinkler heads, smoke & heat detectors or fire alarm pull stations).
- Do not hang decorations on, or change the appearance of, any exit door (i.e. wrapping a door to look like a present).

If you have any questions or would like some clarification on these or any other fire safety related issues, please contact your local Fire Safety Management representative.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday,

Fire Safety Management Team

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