



News Release

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State Fire Marshal Issues Holiday Safety Information

Baton Rouge, LA- Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning has released important fire safety practices to ensure a fire safe holiday. Louisiana citizens are asked to utilize this information to protect their family this Christmas season. The following tips are encouraged:

PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1–2” from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer’s instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.

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.

Most importantly, ensure you have working smoke alarms in your home. Alarms should be operating in every sleeping room and on each level of your home near the hallway. Fire Marshal Browning stated, "Please enjoy this Christmas season and take a moment to be safe, the firefighters of this state do not want to respond any fire losses or deaths. History teaches us that more tragedies occur this time of the year". For more information in reference to fire safety visit the following websites; lasfm.org or nfpa.org.

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