



Holiday Decorating Safety

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The Orange County Fire Authority wants you and your loved ones to enjoy a safe and happy holiday season. We have provided some safety tips to ensure that your holiday celebrations are fire safe and injury free.

Paper Decorations, Trimmings, and Christmas Wrapping Paper:

Decorations around the home may be beautiful, but can also be hazardous. When purchasing your holiday decorations remember the following holiday safety tips.



- Use only non-combustible or flame retardant materials.
- Wear gloves while decorating with spun glass "angel hair". It can irritate eyes or skin. A frequently used substance is non-flammable cotton. When used alone, either is flame proof. However, if non flammable artificial snow is sprayed on them, the dried combination is highly flammable and will burn rapidly.



- Choose tinsel or artificial icicles made from plastic or non-leaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children and/or pets.
- When making paper decorations, look for materials labeled "flame proof" or "fire resistant."
- Never place trimmings near open flames or electrical connections. Be especially careful if paper is used for Christmas costumes.

• Remove all wrapping papers from trees and fireplace areas immediately after presents are opened. Place papers in a metal-covered trash barrel. Never burn them in a fireplace. Wrappings are very flammable and ignite suddenly and burn fiercely. Pieces of burning paper may rise up in the chimney and land on a roof or dry vegetation, starting a fire.

In homes with small children, take special care to:

- Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food. A child could eat them!
- Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.
- Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of reach of children. Pieces could be swallowed or inhaled.



Happy Holidays from the Orange County Fire Authority.



Candle and Fireplace Safety

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Candles: Nearly 85% of candle fire incidents are started because of consumer misuse - leaving them unattended or placing them near combustible materials.

- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Keep candles away from other decorations and wrapping paper.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended. Place them where they can't be knocked down or blown over and always extinguish before leaving room or going to bed.
- Always use heat-resistant and non-tip holders designed for candle usage.
- Never put candles near exits, vents or other drafty areas.
- Extinguish and discard taper or pillar candles when they get within two (2) inches of their holders.



Fireplaces: While a roaring fire in the fireplace can be cozy, it can also be dangerous if safety precautions are not taken.

- Before lighting any fire, remove all greens, boughs, papers and other decorations from fireplace area.



- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional at least once a year. Always open your chimney flute or damper to allow smoke to get out.
 - Make sure your chimney has a spark arrestor. Never burn trash or paper in a fireplace as it can float up the chimney and onto your roof or yard.
 - Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace opening to prevent embers or sparks from popping out on to carpeting.
 - Remove ashes in a metal container and never store them inside your home.
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- Do not use kerosene or any other lighter fluid to make the flames burn more brightly - these substances will only coat the inside of your chimney.
 - If synthetic logs are used, follow the directions on the package. Never break a synthetic log to increase the fire or use more than one log at a time. They often burn unevenly, releasing higher levels of carbon monoxide.