

## Washington Fire Marshal Office

### HOLIDAY DECORATIONS



#### SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Before natural trees are set up, the trunk should be sawed off above the original cut, set in a stand and tap water added. This final fresh cut opens up the sap channels in the tree so that it can take up water. Keep your tree stand water level above the cut in the trunk to prevent the tree from forming a sap seal. A sap sealed tree will not draw water which is needed for it to remain fresh.
2. All trees should be held upright in sturdy stands having a base that is sufficiently broad enough to effectively support the tree. Guy wires may be needed to steady oversized trees.
3. Natural trees having root balls should be moistened daily and cut natural trees should be placed in containers of water sufficient to provide at least a 1-day supply. A container holding at least 1 quart per inch in stem diameter is recommended.
4. Natural trees should remain indoors only for as long a period as they are fresh. Cut trees are thirsty! Depending on tree size, they may use from 2 pints to 1 ½ gallons or more per day – so make sure to check the water level daily and supply fresh water as needed. Remove any tree that shows evidence of drying or severe shedding.
5. All trees and decorations should be located a safe distance from sources of heat such as heaters, fireplaces, stoves, television sets, candles, and the like. **NEVER DECORATE YOUR TREE WITH CANDLES!!!**
6. Overloaded electrical outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday-related accidents. Worn-out electrical cords and plugs should be replaced. Avoid too many plugs in one outlet. Use multi-outlet power strips when running many applications or decorative light screens.
7. All sources of electrical lighting, both direct and indirect, should be in good condition and consist of equipment that has been tested and labeled or listed for the specific purpose by a recognized testing laboratory. All lighting should be turned off or better yet, disconnected, when the area is unattended. This is especially important in residential occupancies when the occupants are asleep.