

Safety tips

- Unplug or turn off all electrical appliances when not in use
- Check all electrical cords before using appliances
- Don't overload electrical outlets
- No more than one extension cord per outlet
- Plug all major appliances directly into the wall outlet
- Don't run electrical cords under carpets or around door frames
- Don't plug extension cords or surge protectors into other extension cords or surge protectors

Reminders

The use of combustible vegetation (live Christmas trees, cornstalks, hay bales, candles, etc.) at base public assembly facilities requires the advance approval from the fire department. Reference CAFBI 32-101

The use of combustible vegetation (hay bales, corn stalks, Christmas trees, ect.) near exits is prohibited in child care facilities and child care homes. Reference Life Safety Code.

Celebrating the holiday season safely

By Robert Hoffman
Fire Inspector

We're entering the winter holiday season, and with this we're thinking of all the parties, decorations and general running around we need to get done. In other words--more distractions. We need to think about fire safety also.

Did you know that approximately 600 fires per year in the U.S. happen during the Christmas holiday?

Celebrations usually include candles, electric light decorations, greenery, fireworks and lots of cooking. Let's break down some of the ways we can be fire safe.

Cooking

The Christmas holiday is a time when kitchen use increases. This is also a time when burn injuries rise, especially in the kitchen.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. That makes it especially important to pay close attention when you're in the kitchen.

Children should be supervised in the kitchen and taught how to handle appliances properly. Don't overload electrical circuits and

don't leave unattended food cooking on the stove.

The new rage is deep fried turkey. Store your propane cylinder safely in a flammable storage locker and be careful putting the turkey in the hot grease. Remember that grease heated to 350 degrees will cause third degree burns if handled wrong.

Do not cook under your carports or next to buildings, stay 15 feet from the over hang of the house or facility.

Holiday lighting

Take care when burning candles. Be sure candles are placed in sturdy, non-combustible holders and are kept well away from decorations and other combustible material.

Check candles frequently to make sure they don't burn down too far or drip hot wax. Don't leave children unattended in a room with lit candles and always keep candles, matches and lighters up high and out of the reach of children. Don't display lighted candles in windows or near exits in case you do have to escape.

If using a Menorah for Hanukkah or Kinara for Kwanzaa, electric models can be used instead of candles. There are specially

designed velcroed flames that can be used and are available at specialty stores.

Christmas trees

Choose a fresh Christmas tree and put it in a stand designed not to tip over. Place the tree well away from a heat source and exits.

Water it constantly.

Trees that have been treated with a fire-retardant chemical are available at many tree lots. If you use an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.

When decorating with lights, be sure they are in good working order, free of nicks and broken wiring and that they are approved by a testing laboratory such as UL. Always unplug lights before leaving the house or going home and don't overload electrical outlets.

Have a safe holiday season.

In case of emergencies, dial 911. For information or to ask questions, call the Charleston AFB Fire Prevention Flight at 963-3121.

