

# HOLIDAY SEASON FIRE SAFETY TIPS

By Deputy Fire Marshal Scott Pringle

Most of us look forward to the winter holiday season. But with the joy and happiness that many of us associate with this time of year, also comes a very real and serious danger - FIRE!

Unfortunately, the winter holiday season almost always results in an increase in residential fires. There are a number of factors that account for this escalation in fire frequency, including the increase in home heating-related fires, and fires associated with the use of candles and holiday decorations.

Please take a few moments to review some basic fire safety tips that could help you or someone you know prevent a fire.



Keep candles in non-tip holders, and away from children, pets, and combustibles



Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children



Always ensure that holiday lights are unplugged before leaving home or going to bed



Use only flame retardant or non-combustible materials for decorations



Have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional at least once a year



Be sure not to overload electrical outlets and ensure all cords are free of damage



Keep 3 feet of clearance around space heaters and other heat sources



Never burn trash or paper in a fireplace



Place Christmas trees away from exits, fireplaces, and heat sources



If using a live tree, ensure that it has water constantly



If using an artificial tree, make sure that it is labeled as being flame retardant



Never leave burning candles unattended



Test your smoke alarms and ensure that they have fresh batteries