MIB/SIB SAFETY GUIDE FOR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

The holiday season has begun! It's a time for fellowship, good times and safety. Safety? Yes, use these guidelines to make sure safety is included in your holiday planning, both in the office and at home.

DO

- ✓ Make sure holiday lights bear markings of an independent testing laboratory such as UL, FM, CE or CSA.
- ✓ **NEW-** Replace older incandescent light sets with newer LED strands. More than 3 light strands can be connected using LED compared to incandescent lights. LED lights use 100 times less electricity and have a much longer life span. The maximum end-to-end connection of LED light strands is not to exceed 220 watts (see total watts per strand on the manufacturer's tag affixed to each light set).
- ✓ Check lights for broken or loose sockets, frayed or bare wires or loose connections. Do not use light strands if damaged.
- ✓ Unplug all lights on trees and other decorations before leaving for the day. Lights could short-out and cause a fire.
- ✓ Keep trees away from heat sources such as office fan coil units.
- ✓ Inspect artificial trees making sure they're labeled as flame retardant.
- ✓ Use decorations (including ornaments) that are flame-resistant or non-combustible. Decorations must be flame-resistant or non-combustible in public spaces of the building.
- ✓ Check to make sure a natural tree is: fresh, green, and not too dry. Needles should be hard to pull from branches or when bent between your fingers, fresh needles don't break. When the trunk of a tree is bounced on the ground, a shower of falling needles shows the tree is too dry.
- ✓ Call the OFAS Service Desk at 208-2222 if you see tree needles or water puddles on the floor so they can arrange to clean it up. Needles and water on the floor will create a slipping hazard.

DON'T

- Block exits or hallways with trees, lights or decorations. No decorative materials may be used in such a manner as to obstruct view of exit signs, fire alarm pull stations, fire strobe lights, public address speakers, sprinkler heads or fire extinguishers cabinets.
- Plug in ***more than three sets*** (incandescent bulbs) of lights strands per wall outlet and a maximum of 220 watts for LED lights sets.
- Run electrical cords through doorways or transoms (windows above doors).
- Let trees go without water and dry out. An 8 foot dry tree can burn completely down in 27 seconds.
- Ever use open flame candles in the Interior Complex.

OFAS safety personnel are available to advise your office before decorating begins. Special walk-through inspections will take place throughout this holiday season to ensure compliance. If you have any questions, please contact the Occupational Safety, Health and Environmental Branch for assistance at 208-2222, 501-8693 or 219-0847.

For additional information pertaining to the full range of occupational safety and occupational health services available to DOI employees, visit our website at: http://www.doi.gov/ofas/asd/oshe.cfm