

SAFETY GUIDE FOR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

When deciding how to decorate your office for the holiday season, it's important to practice the same safety considerations that apply when decorating your home. Use these guidelines to ensure you and your colleagues can enjoy the holiday season – **SAFELY**.

DO

- Prior to decorating, notify the OFAS at 208-2222. Let them know if a live tree will be used.
- Keep trees away from heat sources such as office induction units and fan coil units.
- Unplug all lights on trees and other decorations before leaving for the day. Lights could short-out and cause a fire.
- Make sure holiday lights bear markings of an independent testing laboratory such as UL, FM, or CSA.
- Check lights for broken or loose sockets, frayed or bare wires or loose connections. Don't use if they are damaged.
- Make sure the tree stand is adequate to hold the weight of the tree without tipping.
- 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.
- Cut off about 1/2 " of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption.
- Call the Building Manager's Office at 208-2222 if you see tree needles or water puddles on the floor so they can arrange for clean it up. Needles and water on the floor will create a slipping hazard.

DON'T

- Block exits or means of egress with trees, lights or decorations. No decorative materials will 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 of lights per wall outlet.
- Run electrical cords through doorways or transoms (windows above doors).
- Use electric lights on metal trees.
- Combine "angel hair" and "spray flocking." The combination is highly combustible.
- 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.
- Forget there are building occupants that are allergic to live (evergreen) trees.

Beginning in November, 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>