

December 18, 2013

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**Holiday fire safety reminder**

The Campbell River Fire Department's holiday wish is for all residents to have a merry, bright and safe holiday season – and to make sure your tree and feasting are a source of joy this Christmas.

By following fire prevention tips, you can greatly reduce the risk of fire in your home, and enjoy a safe holiday season while helping the Fire Department's holiday wish come true.

*“The first step is to choose a tree with fresh, green needles that don't fall off when touched,”* says Fire Chief Ian Baikie. *“Keeping the tree well watered once it's in your home is also essential.”*

Maintenance and decorating tips to prevent Christmas tree fires:

- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source (fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights).
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand daily.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Do not keep a Christmas tree indoors once it's dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

*“Cooking is also a leading cause of fires in the home, and most can be prevented,”* says Chief Baikie.

Prevent kitchen fires:

- Never leave cooking unattended, even for a short time.
- Don't wear loose-fitting clothing while cooking.
- Never put water on a cooking fire. If a fire occurs, place a tight fitting lid on the pot or pan, turn off the heat, go outside and call the Fire Department.

*“Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors save lives, as long as they're in good working order,”* adds Chief Baikie. *“Give your loved ones the gift of safety this season. Change the batteries if required and remember to test these devices monthly.”*

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