



SPECIAL EDITION CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

Hinds County Department of Emergency Management

Hinds County Board of Supervisors



Ricky Moore, Director

December 2015

<http://www.hindscountyms.com/departments/emergency-management>

Volume 3, Issue 5

Greetings,

We hope that each of you has had a good year and that many memories were made. Our sincere hope is that during this holiday season you will enjoy some special moments with family & friends. We would like to share a few things that will assist you in keeping your family safe and secure.

- Always turn off holiday lights when you leave the house unattended or when going to bed.
- Carefully inspect holiday light strings each year and throw away any with frayed cords, cracked lamp holders or loose connections. When replacing bulbs unplug the string and be sure to match voltage and wattage to the original bulb.
- Vacations are common during the holiday season and criminals keep their eyes open for empty homes. Ask a friend or neighbor to pick up your mail, leave a few indoor lights on and do not leave a spare key in an easy to find place. Never discuss your plans with strangers or post on social media.
- Don't leave any food out at room temperature for more than two hours. Use sealable containers, and don't over pack the fridge; the air needs to circulate to maintain the proper temperature. Baked goods should be thrown out within a few days.
- Shop during daylight hours when possible. If you must shop at night, park closer to the stores or near a light post so when you return to your vehicle you are in a well-lit area.
- Place ornaments higher on the tree than children or pets can reach. If swallowed, ornaments or pieces of them can cause blockages or other serious injuries. The hooks that many use are detachable and pose a choking hazard.
- Tinsel is loved by small children and pets, this sparkly light-catching "toy" can be fun to play with but if swallowed or accidentally wrapped around them it can be very dangerous.
- Keep your pets away from the table and unattended plates of food and be sure to secure the lids on garbage cans. Mistletoe berries, Holly Berry and Jerusalem Cherry can be poisonous to animals.
- The number of fires caused by children playing with fire goes up significantly during the holidays. Keep matches and lighters out of sight and kids' reach. Make sure to buy a "child resistant" lighter.

As you take some time to enjoy the holidays with your family and friends we hope you will heed our advice for the safety of your loved ones and your homes. One more thing before we go, during this festive time focus on the things you are thankful for, take long naps, eat lots of fabulous food and then talk a stroll around the block because everybody knows after the New Year begins it is all about getting healthy!

Merry Christmas,

The Staff at the Hinds County EOC



Physical: 300 N. State St.

Jackson, MS 39201

Mailing: P.O. Box 22568

Jackson, MS 39225-2568

Phone: 601.960.1476

Phone: 601.968.6771

Fax: 601.355.9943



Each year, fire departments respond to an average of 210 structure fires caused by Christmas trees. Carefully decorating Christmas trees can help make your holidays safer.

Picking the tree

- If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant. Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

Placing the tree

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1" - 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.

Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

Lighting the tree

- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
 - 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.
 - Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

After Christmas

Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Check with your local community to find a recycling program. Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

Source: <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/holidays/christmas-tree-fires/christmas-tree-safety-tips>

FACTS

- ! Each year, fire departments respond to roughly 200 structure fires caused by Christmas trees.
- ! Two out of five home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes one quarter of the fires.

