



Often as we end our Thanksgiving celebrations, our minds start to drift towards Christmas. Decorations are taken out of the attic and put in their place around our home. You may have even put your tree up.

This is a joyous time of year and it's fun to decorate for the holidays. Decorations are festive and beautiful. But, remember if they are not properly managed they can also be very dangerous and increase the risk of fire in your home.

We urge you to keep fire safety in mind as you deck the halls and offer these helpful hints to keep you and yours safe.

- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Connect no more than 3 strands of mini-light sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Check the packaging; **some lights are only for indoor use.**
- Do not block exits with trees or decorations.
- Get rid of your tree right after Christmas – or when it's dry – look for community recycling programs for disposal of your tree.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.
- Keep candles at least 12-inches from ANYTHING that burns.
- Make sure your tree is at least 3-feet away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles, and heat vents.

- When choosing a real tree, make sure the needles are fresh and green and do not fall off when touched. Before placing it in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the tree.
- Water real trees daily.
- Make sure if you have an artificial tree, it's labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire-retardant.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

We hope that you will find these tips helpful while you are decorating for the holidays. And, from all of us here at Isle of Wight Fire Rescue, we wish you and yours a very safe and happy holiday season.