

Decorating the Tree: Trimmings

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials.
- Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.
- Avoid the use of spun glass “angel hair” to avoid irritation to eyes and skin.
- Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays. Use spray snow that is labeled nontoxic.
- Use a step stool or stepladder when decorating the higher limbs, and make sure it is in good condition. Many home accidents occur when people fall off whatever they are standing on.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree (even an artificial tree) or near other evergreens.

In houses with small children, take special care to:

- Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.
- Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children. Pieces could be swallowed or inhaled.
- Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food. A child could eat them!

Gifts Under the Tree

- Never place paper-wrapped or paper-bagged gifts near open flames or electrical connections.
- Remove all wrapping papers, boxes, and other trash from tree and fireplace areas immediately after presents are opened.
- Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely. Gift wrapping burns very hot, causing large flames, which can ignite creosote deposits in the chimney and cause a fire in the chimney.

The Texas Department of Insurance,
Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI, DWC)
E-mail resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

After the Holidays

Taking down the Christmas tree isn't nearly as much fun as putting it up. But the longer a tree stays up, the greater a fire hazard it becomes. It's best to discard trees within one month after purchase.

- When Christmas is over or the tree begins to drop needles, dispose of it.
- Do not leave it in the house or store it in the garage.
- To dispose of your tree take it to a tree recycling center or have it hauled away by a community pick-up service. If you live in the country or town where there is no tree recycling or pick-up program, contact local authorities for a recommended means of disposal.
- Never burn Christmas trees (branches or needles) in a fireplace or wood stove. Firs and pines have lots of sap, which can explode. The needles burn like tinder, quickly and fiercely. Flames can flare up out of control and send sparks flying across a room. They can also ignite creosote deposits in the chimney and cause a fire in the chimney.

Information in this publication is courtesy of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Naval Safety Center, the Texas State Fire Marshal's Office, and the National Fire Protection Association.

Safety Violations Hotline
1-800-452-9595
safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us