

Holiday Fire Safety Tips from the Berkeley Fire Department

The Berkeley Fire Department reminds you that December, January and February are the leading months for home fires and home fire deaths in the United States. The greater majority of these fires are preventable. Follow these easy steps to keep your home and family safe from the threat of fire:

Christmas Trees

- *Choose a fresh tree:* Needles should be green and hard to pull back from the branches. The trunk should be sticky.
- *Care for your tree:* Keep your tree away from heat, including a fireplace or heating vent. Don't leave your tree up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water.
- *Dispose of your tree:* Never put branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The City of Berkeley will pick up Christmas trees on regular plant debris removal days during January.
- If you use an artificial tree, make sure it's flame retardant.



Holiday Lights and Decorations



- Keep all tinsel, garlands and greenery out of the reach of small children or pets.
 - Inspect your holiday lights for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive wear before putting them up.
 - Don't link more than three light strands. Connect the light strings to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Periodically check the wires to be sure they are cool.
 - Never leave holiday lights on unattended.
 - Use only nonflammable or flame-retardant decorations.
- Never put wrapping paper in a fireplace.

Candles

- Avoid lighting candles. If you light them, make sure they are in stable holders and placed where they cannot be easily knocked down.
- Never leave the house with candles burning.
- Never put lit candles on a tree.

For more information on holiday fire safety, call Berkeley's Fire Prevention Office at 510-981-5585.