



**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

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**State Fire Marshal's Office  
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**Deck the Halls with Fire Safety!**

**Olympia** – The holidays are here and 'tis the season for eating, drinking, and laughing with loved ones. Although this season is filled with fun parties and celebrations galore, it is also filled with increased fire hazards. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the two peak days for candle fires in the United States are Christmas and Christmas Eve. They are also among the top days for cooking fires in the United States, exceeded in number only on Thanksgiving.

Whether you are a "hostess with the mostest" type or the ultimate party attendee, you can ensure your holidays are merry and bright this year by using the following tips to stay fire-safe no matter what your plans are:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stove so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Be alert when you cook. Do not use the stove if you are distracted, sleepy, or have consumed alcohol.
- Use candles with caution. If possible, use battery powered flameless candles. If you use lit candles, make sure they are in a stable holder and place them where they cannot be easily knocked over.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep escape routes clear. Never block exits with trees or decorations. If you host people, ensure everyone knows two ways out of each room.
- Familiarize yourself with exits, fire extinguisher locations, and emergency evacuation plans when you are in a new environment.
- Working smoke alarms never go out of season. Ensure you have working smoke alarms in each sleeping area, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.

For more information on holiday fire safety and prevention, visit the SFMO's website at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/prevention-data-collection/> or follow us on Twitter @wafiremarshal.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.