



Washington State Patrol • State Fire Marshal Chad Cross

*** For Immediate Release***

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12 Days of Fire Safety

Olympia- December is a month filled with celebration, gatherings, decorations, and festive traditions, but it's also one of the busiest times of year for preventable home fires. From candles and cooking to overloaded outlets and heating equipment, holiday hazards can quickly turn dangerous without proper precautions. To help keep families safe this season, the State Fire Marshal's Office is launching the "12 Days of Fire Safety" campaign, offering simple, actionable tips to reduce fire risks throughout the holidays. By practicing these safety steps, our community can enjoy a joyful, safe, and fire-free holiday season.

The 12 Days of Fire Safety

1. **Check Your Smoke Alarms:** test smoke alarms, replace batteries if needed, and make sure alarms are installed on every level of your home.
2. **Practice Your Escape Plan:** review your family's fire escape plan and ensure everyone knows two ways out of each room.
3. **Cook with Caution:** stay in the kitchen when cooking, keep flammables and combustibles away from the stovetop, and turn pot handles inward to avoid tipping or spilling hot foods/oils.
4. **Water Your Christmas Tree:** a dry tree can ignite in seconds; keep it well-watered and away from heat sources.
5. **Inspect Holiday Lights:** check for frayed cords, broken bulbs, or loose connections, and replace damaged strands immediately.
6. **Use Candles Safely:** keep candles at least 12 inches from anything that can burn and never leave them unattended. Use battery operated candles when possible, especially if children or pets are present.
7. **Avoid Overloading Outlets:** plug decorations into surge protectors and avoid daisy-chaining extension cords. Select surge protectors and extension cords that are listed for the intended use.
8. **Use of Portable Space Heaters:** maintain a three-foot "kid-free and clutter-free zone" around portable space heaters and never leave them running unattended. Ensure the portable heater is listed and has tip protection built into the device.
9. **Store Matches and Lighters Safely:** keep them locked away and out of reach of children.
10. **Practice Safe Fireplace Use:** use a sturdy screen, clean your chimney annually, and always dispose of ashes in a metal container.
11. **Stay Alert While Celebrating:** alcohol and fire don't mix. Be cautious when cooking, decorating, or using candles during gatherings.
12. **Know Your Local Emergency Numbers:** make sure everyone in your home knows how to call for help in case of an emergency.

For more information, contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at (360) 596-3904.

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