

December 2024

## OVERVIEW OF FACT SHEET



There are multitudes of holidays celebrated from late November to mid-January where families and friends willgather. Oftentimes, these holidays include decorations. Unfortunately, there were an estimated 15,000 injuries seen in emergency rooms during this time due to holiday decorating, which has increased from year to year. An estimated 200 house fires occur during this time as well.

This fact sheet provides general tips about various activities during the winter holiday season and how you could prevent injuries or other incidents.

If you have any questions regarding winter holiday safety or other safety topics, please contact the [Environmental Health and Safety Office](#) at 704-687-1111.

# Holiday Safety

## Campus Fire Safety [Watch Out for those Fire-Starters]

- Do not use candles in your office. Consider using battery-operated flameless candles
- Do not use any type of decorations in your office that have an open flame
- Decorations, lights, signs, and ornaments are prohibited from being placed on fire doors
- Do not hang anything from a sprinkler head
- Do not place any decorations on a fire door
- Do not place decorations in exit corridors, nor in places that can obstruct the view of exit signs, fire alarm pull stations, or fire extinguishers
- Do not overload outlets and get into the habit of unplugging holiday lights before you leave the office for the day

## Home Safety [Keep Friends and Family Safe]

- Make sure all smoke alarms are working properly
- Inspect holiday lights each year before you put them up
- Decorate with little ones in mind – hang breakable ornaments away from reach
- Tell guests about your home fire evacuation plan and assembly point
- Daily water your live Christmas tree. A dry tree is dangerous because it can easily catch fire

## Food Safety [Don't Give the Gift of Food Poisoning]

- Wash your hands frequently when handling food
- Refrigerate food within two hours
- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is thoroughly cooked
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165 F

## General Safety [Avoid Trip to the ER]

- Leave early, planning for heavy traffic
- Use a proper step ladder instead of chairs to reach high areas
- Make sure paths are clear of decorations, cords, etc. to prevent falls



## GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Are open flames allowed on campus?
- What items are prohibited from being placed on a fire door?
- How often should you water your Christmas tree?