

Holiday Decoration Safety

Nursing homes, facilities serving people with developmental disabilities and hospitals must comply with the following requirements related to combustibles.

They are also recommended for other community service providers, such as community based residential facilities, adult family homes and all other providers.

Many of the holiday decorations that are used can be highly flammable or pose an unusual fire hazard. The references cited in parentheses are from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code (LSC) Standard 101, 2000 Edition.

The following precautions are advised:

1. Combustible decorations are prohibited unless they are flame-retardant (LSC Chapter 18.7.5.4).
2. No furnishings, decorations or other objects shall be placed so as to obstruct exits, corridors or exit signs (LSC Chapter 7.10.1.7).
3. No open flame devices, such as candles or kerosene heaters, shall be used (LSC Chapter 18.7.8).
4. Christmas trees shall not be used unless flame-retardant (LSC Chapter 18.7.5.4). Retain manufacture labeling or certification of flame retardancy.
5. Decorative power lighting will be permitted if power circuits do not become overloaded and light strings are listed and in good condition.

The number of light strings in series shall not constitute an electrical hazard and manufacturer's safety precautions must be followed. Please be mindful of the tripping hazards associated with electrical cords or other holiday paraphernalia.

6. Fire extinguishers shall not be obstructed or obscured from view (NFPA 10 Section 1-6.6).
7. Sprinkler piping or hangers shall not be used to support non-system components (NFPA 13 Section 6-1.1.5).