



## VALLEY CENTER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Administrative Office & Fire Prevention Bureau  
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**A Christmas tree, even one treated to be flame-retardant, is capable of burning explosively, spreading the fire throughout your home quickly. Taking proper care of your Christmas tree, however, will help prevent this tragedy from happening to you.**

### **Choose Your Tree Carefully!**

- A live tree which can be planted after Christmas will be more likely to stay fresh throughout the season than a cut tree. Choose a healthy one and water it moderately while it is in the house.
- When choosing a cut tree, look for freshness; the needles should be difficult to pull from the branches and shouldn't break when bent between your fingers.
- If purchasing an artificial tree, choose one that is labeled fire resistant.

### **Consider Where You are Placing Your Tree and Furniture!**

- Position the tree away from fireplaces, heat registers, direct sunlight, and other sources of heat that can cause the tree to dry out prematurely or even ignite it.
- If rearranging furniture to make room for the tree, maintain clearance from sources of heat and maintaining safe exit ways and passageways.

### **Keep Your Cut Tree Fresh!**

- Once home, spray the tree with water to remove dead needles and dust, then cut 2" off the base and immerse the cut end into water immediately.
- Place the tree in a sturdy stand, capable of holding a large amount of water.
- Check the water in the tree stand often. An average tree can consume a quart to a gallon of water every day.
- Do not allow the water level to drop below the base of the tree or pores will seal again, preventing water absorption. If pouring water in the basin is difficult, add ice cubes regularly.

### **Decorate the Tree Safely!**

- Decorate the tree with UL approved miniature lights rather than the larger ones to prevent heat build up and lessen drying effects. NEVER use real candles on a tree.
- Inspect used lights carefully for frayed wires, broken sockets, or signs of wear and discard if damage is observed.
- Use only UL listed lights and other electrical items and limit to no more than 3 strands or items per outlet.
- Turn off or unplug Christmas tree and exterior lights before leaving the house or going to bed.

### **After Christmas:**

- Remove the tree from the house promptly.
- Never burn a Christmas tree in the fireplace or woodstove.
- Recycle your Christmas tree.

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