



Northville Township Fire Department

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December 2018 Holiday Safety

With the hustle and bustle of the holidays just around the corner the Northville Township Fire Department wants to help you and your family prepare for a safe and happy holiday season. The next few months are filled with cold winter air, holiday lights and gatherings with family and friends. So as you stuff your stockings, string your lights and await Santa Claus, we urge you to take a moment to make sure that you and your family are prepared for the **most dangerous season of the year for home fires**.

The holidays bring many great traditions including the search for the family Christmas tree. Whether you pick up a pre-cut Christmas tree or trek into the woods like the Griswold's, make sure to always follow these tips:

- Choose a freshly cut tree.
- Keep it watered regularly.
- Only use lights listed by a recognized testing laboratory, like UL.
- Always turn off the lights before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Remember that dry trees can ignite quickly and burn fast so it's important remove them from your home right after Christmas.

The winter weather warrants a reminder to all of us to have working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms installed in your home. The falling temperatures lead to an increase in the use of your furnace, water heater and fireplace, which are all common causes of fires and CO emergencies. Having CO alarms installed in your home is more important than ever. Working CO alarms will alert you when dangerous levels of CO build-up in your home and give you time to escape and call 9-1-1. Please remember to clean your dryer, water heater and furnace vents regularly and have these appliances serviced by a qualified professional. Lastly, make sure that your fireplace is working properly, as it is one of the leading causes of carbon monoxide related issues.

Prepare for the upcoming season by following this checklist:

- 1) Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, in the hallway outside each room and on every floor.
- 2) Install a CO alarm on every floor of your home.
- 3) Install combination smoke and CO alarms.
- 4) Install alarms with 10-year batteries.
- 5) Replace all smoke alarms that are 10 years old or older.
- 6) Change your batteries in both your smoke and CO alarms every year.
- 7) Develop and practice your home escape plan (It's not just for kids...)
- 8) Clean your oven before prepping those big holiday meals.

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- 9) Keep your Christmas tree watered and away from open flames.
 - 10) Don't overload your electrical outlets or power strips with holiday lights.
 - 11) Use caution anytime you use candles in your home. While candles create a nice holiday ambiance, please make sure to keep them away from all combustibles, including holiday décor.
 - 12) Keep portable heaters at least three feet from anything that can burn. Only use UL listed heaters and those with tip-over protection.
 - 13) Have your chimney cleaned and inspected before it's used and also periodically throughout the year. Creosote buildup is the leading cause of chimney fires.
 - 14) Have your furnace inspected and serviced annually.
 - 15) Clean your dryer, water heater and furnace vents regularly. Animals seek refuge in these warm vents and can cause CO and fire incidents.

We also ask that you be neighborly and assist others who may not be able to clear the snow from their sidewalks, driveways and fire hydrants. Every second counts in both fire and medical emergencies, so please take the time to make sure that your home is accessible. On behalf of all of us at the Northville Township Fire Department, we wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please contact us at (248) 348-5807 or visit us at www.northvillemich.com/fire for more information.