



Oregon

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Administrator Alert

Date: December 1st, 2015

To: Assisted Living, Residential
Care, Memory Care Communities

From: Office of Licensing and Regulatory Oversight

Subject: Holiday Décor and Fire Safety Guidelines

Oregon Fire Marshal Health Care Unit

Code Reference: 2010 Oregon Fire Code

Subject: Guidance on the use of decorative items during traditional holidays but these guidelines may be utilized at any time of the year.

Contents: For the purposes of this technical advisory, the following shall apply:

EGRESS Access to exits and exit paths shall not be obstructed by decorative materials.

SOURCES OF IGNITION

- Candles and other sources of open flame are not allowed for any decorations or ceremonies, except as approved by the fire code official prior to the event.
- Sources of ignition shall not be allowed within the vicinity of combustible decorative materials.

ELECTRICAL

Electrical lights and cords that are physically damaged or altered shall not be used.

DECORATIVE MATERIALS

- Decorative materials are materials applied over interior finishes such as curtains, drapes, fabrics, streamers and other surface coverings, batting, cloth, cotton, hay, stalks, straw, vines, leaves, trees, moss, and similar items including foam plastics.
- Natural cut vegetation, including natural cut Christmas trees.

- Fire-retardant coatings are not required or recommended on natural cut trees and will not extend the length of time a tree should be permitted indoors. While freshly cut trees are naturally flame resistant due to their high water content, they become extremely flammable when permitted to dry out. When brought indoors, the heat and lower humidity will accelerate the drying process.

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Care of Christmas trees shall be as follows:

- Sawed off at least one inch above the original cut.
- Mounted securely in a tree stand, pail, tub, or other water-type holder or reservoir.
- Maintain the water level above the cut as long as the tree is indoors and add fresh water daily.
- Avoid placement near heating sources including fireplaces, air vents and space heaters which can accelerate the drying process and may also pose an ignition hazard.
- All decorations shall be either inherently fire retardant or treated with a flame retardant to be flame resistant and shall comply with the Oregon Fire Code 2007 Edition, Section 807.
- The means of egress shall not be obstructed by decorative vegetation or materials.
- Natural cut Christmas trees are prohibited in health care type occupancies.

Exceptions:

- 1) Trees located in areas protected by an approved automatic sprinkler system excluding patient rooms.
- 2) Trees in patient rooms that meet one of the following:
 - a) A live Christmas tree not exceeding 24 inches in height, including the pot. Pots shall not exceed 9 inches in diameter.
 - b) An artificial tree of non-combustible material not exceeding 24 inches in height.

No electrical decorations are allowed on Christmas trees in resident rooms.

Exception. Battery operated listed miniature or LED style lights may be used with the approval of the facility.

- Decorative material shall not exceed more than 30% of corridor wall area.
- Artificial decorative vegetation, e.g., artificial Christmas trees shall meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 and shall be documented and certified by the manufacturer in an approved manner.
- Listed miniature or LED style lights may be used in resident rooms around the

inner framing of a window with the approval of the facility.

- Contact local fire authority for fireworks displays. Contact the Office of State Fire Marshal for required permits.

Other References: NFPA 101