

## Safe Ho-Ho-Holiday Season Decorating!

(Penticton, BC – November 21, 2019) – The Penticton Fire Department is suggesting some practical safety guidelines that can be followed to prevent against common safety hazards associated with indoor and outdoor holiday decorations.

During holiday decorating, people are inadvertently exposed to greater risk of becoming the victim of a fire or electrical accident, such as shock and electrocution. Most of these accidents could be prevented.

“Avoid a tragic festive time of year,” says Fire Prevention Officer, Captain Mike Richards. “Enjoy a fire-safe holiday season by following simple safety precautions.”

- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration for cracked or frayed sockets bare wires, and loose connections that may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Follow the use and care instructions that accompany your electrical decorations.
- Stapling or nailing through electrical wires or extension cords may damage the wire or insulation, which could cause electrical shock or fire.
- Check packaging to determine the maximum number of strings that may be linked together. Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Turn off electrical light strings, candles, and other decorations before leaving home or going to bed. Automatic timers are available for both indoor and outdoor applications.
- Waterproof all electrical connections, and keep them elevated so that water won't drain into the connection and cause a shock or a short circuit.
- Use lights that are approved by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters/CSA.
- Be sure chimney and fireplaces have been inspected and cleaned.
- Whenever possible, choose holiday decorations made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.
- Inflatable outdoor ornaments can easily become dangerous projectiles. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for securing them. It is best to shut off the fan blowers when it's windy, when you are not going to be home for long periods or at bedtime.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, develop and practice a Home Escape Plan.

For further information on holiday decorating and other fire & life safety issues, contact Captain Richards at 250-490-2312 or email: [mike.richards@penticton.ca](mailto:mike.richards@penticton.ca).

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