

CITY OF
Lockhart
TEXAS

NEWS RELEASE

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Keep holidays happy with these tree safety tips

Lockhart Fire Rescue wants citizens to make sure they are up to speed on safe Christmas tree selection, care and disposal as the holiday season gets underway.

Though festive and bright, the popular seasonal living room decor can be dangerous if improperly cared for, with U.S. fire departments responding to an average of 160 home fires annually that start with Christmas trees.

“Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they’re likely to be serious,” Lockhart Fire Rescue Chief Randy Jenkins said. “More than one of every four home Christmas tree fires is caused by electrical fires, and a heat source too close to the tree also causes one in four of the fires.”

Lockhart Fire Rescue and the National Fire Protection Association offer the following tips to keep your living rooms fire free this holiday season:

- When picking a tree, choose one with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.
- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2 inches from the base of the trunk. This will allow it to absorb water more efficiently.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree isn’t blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand daily.
- Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory, and pay attention to labels that might indicate the lights are only for use outdoors.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections, and read manufacturers’ instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never decorate a tree with lit candles.
- Always turn off tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

As the holiday season comes to a close, the City of Lockhart will offer residents Christmas tree recycling (live trees only) at no charge. To have your live tree recycled, simply place the tree with

no ornaments, lights, tinsel, nails, screws or tree bases and call Lockhart Public Works at (512)398-6452 to arrange for collection.