



NEWS RELEASE

December 14, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject: House Fire in San Clemente Caused by Unattended Candle. The OCFA Offers Some Holiday Safety Tips For The Season.

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Orange County, Ca.: A house fire occurred in San Clemente last Thursday, December 10th causing \$250,000 in damage. The fire was held in check by automatic residential fire sprinklers until OCFA Firefighters arrived. The cause was caused by an unattended candle left in the garage. Unfortunately, the holiday season is a time of year that candles among other causes are responsible for increased number of residential fires.

Fires occurring around the holidays cause millions of dollars in damage nationwide. Many hazards associated with these fires can be easily prevented. Some of the hazards include Christmas trees, candles, electrical, and cooking. Here are a few safety tips:

Christmas Trees:

- Keep your tree watered daily. A fresh tree will be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.
- Needles should be hard to pull from the branches and needles should bend but not break.
- Place your tree away from heat sources including fireplaces, heater vents, and space heaters.
- Avoid placing breakable ornaments on lower branches where kids and pets can reach them.
- Remove your tree promptly from your home after the holidays. A dry tree is extremely hazardous!

Candles:

- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.
- Never leave burning candles unattended and keep candles at least 12" from anything that can burn
- Use sturdy candle holders and place them where they can't be knocked down or blown over.
- Keep candles out of reach of children and don't let children sleep in a room with a lit candle.

Electrical/Holiday Lighting:

- Use only approved, tested lights with a "UL" label.
- Use outdoor lights outside, and indoor lights indoor.
- Never use lights on artificial aluminum trees.
- Turn off all holiday lights before going to bed or leaving the home.
- Never overload outlets or use more than 3 sets of lights per single extension cord.
- It's dangerous to run extension cords under carpets, across doorways, on or under heaters, or pinched behind furniture.

Cooking Safety:

- Pay attention to your cooking and keep combustibles away from any heat sources.
- Turn the handles of pots and pans inward to prevent them from being pulled off the stove.
- Never store combustibles in your oven. Please use your cabinets for storage.
- Never use your stove or oven to heat your home.
- Ensure that small appliances are turned off prior to sleeping or leaving the home.

Smoke alarms save lives. The extra time that the smoke alarm provides, greatly increases your chance of survival in a house fire. Test your smoke alarm monthly & change the batteries when changing your clocks.

For more important holiday safety information, call (714) 573-6200 or go to www.ocfa.org.

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