

ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS “Christmas Holiday Fires”



north dakota
department of
human services



July 2014

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Welcome

Welcome to the new online annual Fire Safety Training course for foster parents. This training is an alternative to personally attending the annual Fire Safety course that is offered in each region of the state. By completing the fire safety training online, foster parents can meet the one-hour annual fire safety training requirement in the comfort of your own home according to your own schedule.

Welcome

The N.D. Department of Human Services has established basic fire safety requirements for foster homes. Foster parents are expected to maintain these physical safety requirements. Before initial licensure and each renewal, foster parents are required to complete a Fire Safety Self Declaration and comply with all the regulations.



Introduction

On August 1, 1993, a law went into effect that made it mandatory for all foster families to receive fire safety training before initial licensure and before each licensing renewal.

Introduction

The law provides (NDCC 50-11):

First: Fire prevention training course (before initial licensure and each renewal) created by the State Fire Marshal and the N.D. Department of Human Services to be offered statewide.

Second: Self-declaration forms to be completed and signed by each foster parent before initial licensure and each renewal.

Third: The N.D. Department of Human Services requires various inspections on a case-by-case basis.

Holiday Home Fires Facts

- ❖ Nearly 47,000 fires occur during the winter holidays claiming more than 500 lives, causing more than 2,200 injuries, and costing \$554 million in property damage.
- ❖ Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious. On average, one in every 40 reported home structure Christmas tree fires result in a death - compared to an average of one death per 142 reported home structure fires.



Holiday Home Fires Facts

- ❖ One out of three home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ❖ A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly one in six Christmas tree fires.
- ❖ Holiday lights and other decorative lighting with line voltage were involved in an estimated average of 150 home structure fires per year.



Holiday Home Fire Facts

- ❖ December is the peak time of year for home candle fires. 11% of home candle fires began with decorations compared to 4% the rest of the year.
- ❖ Candle fires are four times as likely to occur during the winter holidays.
- ❖ More than half (56%) of home candle fires occur when something that can catch on fire is too close to a candle.



Holiday Home Fires Facts

- ❖ During the winter holiday season, an average of 40 home fires per day are caused by children playing.
- ❖ Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.
- ❖ Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm near your kitchen, on each level of your home, near sleeping areas, and inside and outside your bedroom if you sleep with the door closed. Use the test button to check it monthly. Replace all batteries at least once a year.

Christmas Tree Fires

LINKS:



Learn more about Christmas tree fires.

Click links below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8j3gUIm6PU>

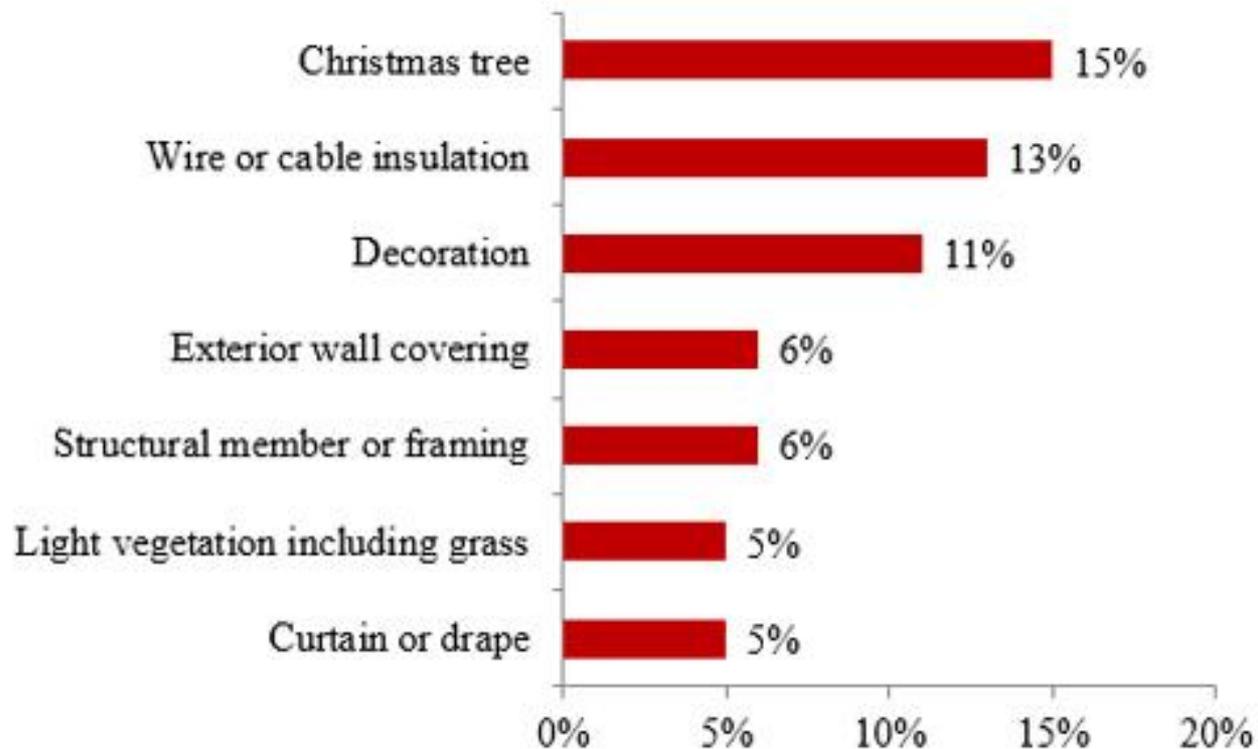
1:40 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkf8-VwQngI>

6:15 minutes

The risk of fire is higher with natural trees than artificial ones. Researchers found that dry natural trees burned easily but trees that had been kept moist are unlikely to catch fire.

**Leading Items First Ignited
in Holiday Light Home Structure Fires**



Purchasing Christmas Trees

- ❖ When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label “Fire Resistant.” Although this label does not mean the tree won’t catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- ❖ When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green; needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.

Placing the Live Tree

- ❖ Before placing the live tree in a stand, cut 2 inches from the base of the tree.
- ❖ 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 is not blocking an exit.
- ❖ Add water to tree stand. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water. Add water daily.

Trees After Christmas

- ❖ Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Check with your local community to find a recycling program. Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.



Lights



- ❖ Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory, which indicates conformance with safety standards. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- ❖ Replace any string of lights that have worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.



Lights

- ❖ Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- ❖ Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- ❖ Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- ❖ Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



Lights



- ❖ Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples, not nails or tacks, to hold strings in place. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores).
- ❖ For added electric-shock protection, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold.

Light Safety

LINKS:



Learn more about Christmas lights and safety.
Click links below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plqjUCqXSGI>

4:40 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB8qthWuMxU>

1:36 minutes

Decorations

- ❖ Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles made of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.
- ❖ Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.

Decorations

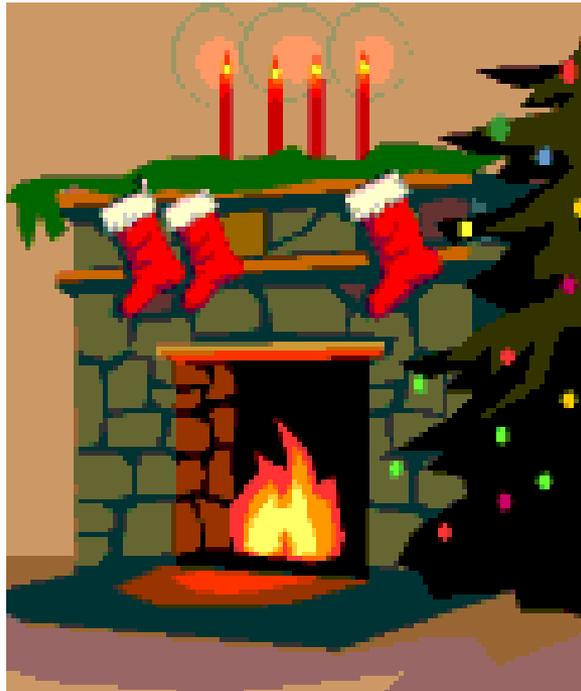
- ❖ In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- ❖ Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass “angel hair.” Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.

Fireplaces

- ❖ Do not remove fireplace embers or ash. If you do, place them in a metal container with a lid and cover them with water. Do not place them in a plastic or paper bag or container that is not fire-resistant. Do not dispose of them indoors or close to your home or another structure.
- ❖ Use care with “fire salts,” which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.

Fireplaces

- ❖ Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.



Do-It-Yourself: Holiday Safety

LINK:



Learn more about Do-It-Yourself: Holiday Safety
Click link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlqjfGFM7HA>

10:03 minutes

Christmas Tree Summary



- ❖ **Water. Water. Water.**
- ❖ **Do not place near heat source**
- ❖ **Do not overload lights and sockets**
- ❖ **Dispose of on your curb or recycling center**

Candle Summary

- ❖ **Battery operated candles are the safest**
- ❖ **Place lighted candles on stable surface**
- ❖ **Keep away from flammables**
- ❖ **Never leave candles unattended**



Lighting Summary

- ❖ Use only UL listed lighting
- ❖ Check condition of strands
- ❖ Do not overload sockets
- ❖ Do not block exits with lights



Summary

Being prepared and planning ahead gives you an edge when looking at protecting your family.

Prevention is always the best way to keep your family safe. By looking at your living space with a critical eye, you may stop a problem before it starts.

Remember, when in doubt, get out and leave the firefighting to the professionals.

Summary

You have learned about holiday fire safety for you and your family.

Please answer the following questions on the next slides to test your understanding of the training. You will have a chance to check your answers.

After reviewing your answers, please print off a copy of the Certificate of Completion, sign, date, and give a copy to your licensing agency. If you are unable to print a copy, please notify your licensing agency.

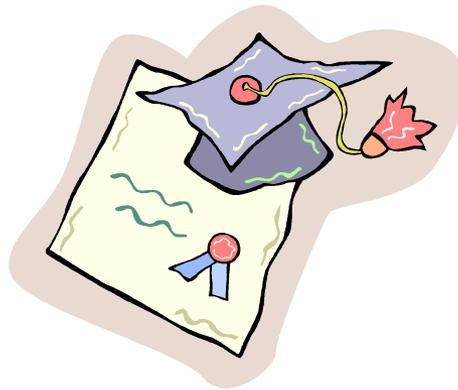
Fire Safety Test Questions

1. An artificial tree that is labeled “Fire Resistant” means that the tree won’t catch fire.
True or False
2. What is the maximum number of standard-size sets of lights that should be used per single extension cord? a. One b. Two c. Three d. Four
3. How far away from heat sources like fireplaces, portable heaters, radiators, heat vents and candles should Christmas trees and holiday decorations be placed?
a. One foot b. Two feet c. Three feet d. Four feet
4. How often should you water a live tree?
a. Daily b. Every other day c. Every third day d. Keep stand filled with water
5. You should never use electric lights on a metallic tree.
True or False
6. There is no problem with burning wrapping paper in the fireplace.
True or False
7. Candle fires are four times as likely to occur during the winter holidays.
True or False
8. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles. True or False

Fire Safety Test Answers

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I hereby certify that I have completed the online Annual Fire Safety Training.

Signature

Date

Acknowledgement and Thanks

When developing this online Annual Fire Safety Course for foster parents in North Dakota, information and resources were provided by:

- N.D. State Fire Marshal's office
- N.D. Department of Human Services
- American Red Cross
- National Fire Protection Association
- PATH North Dakota, Inc.

Questions?

If you have questions regarding this Annual Fire Safety Course, please contact your local foster care licensing agency.

Thank you!

