



SAN RAFAEL FIRE DEPARTMENT

A Season for Sharing in Fire Safety

Each year, fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty. [Holiday Safety Information](#)

Preventing Christmas Tree Fires

Christmas Tree Fire Hazards – This [video](#) demonstrates how fast a live, cut Christmas tree can become fully engulfed in flames. Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.

Selecting a Tree for the Holiday - Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut for too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard. Please keep the tree in a stand with water.

Artificial Christmas Trees - If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Caring for Your Tree - Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of Your Tree – Please never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away. Residents are encouraged to take full advantage of Marin Sanitary Service, which provides [curbside Christmas tree recycling](#) through Green Yard waste pick-up for January 2-12.

Tree stands/bases must be removed. No flocked trees. No trees over six feet. For trees over 6' either cut them in half or bring them to one of our facilities listed below:

San Rafael Fire Stations Accepting Trees for Recycling

Station 55 - 955 Point San Pedro Road

Station 58 – Marinwood - 77 Miller Creek Road

Other Locations

Albert J. Boor Community Center (50 Canal St.)

Manuel T. Freitas Parkway & Del Ganado (Scotty's Market Parking Lot)

Marin Resource Recovery Center (During the entire month of January)

565 Jacoby Street San Rafael, CA 94901 415-485-5648

"Our Mission...is to help"



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Holiday Lights

Maintain Your Holiday Lights - Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets - Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect string of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Please make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.

Please Do Not Leave Indoor Holiday Lights on While Unattended

Holiday Decorations

Use Only Non-flammable Decorations - All decorations should be nonflammable or flame retardant and placed away from heat vents.

Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace - It can throw off dangerous sparks and produce a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion.

Candle Care

Avoid Using Lit Candles - If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

Please Never Place Lit Candles on a Tree - Do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

Fire Safety

Smoke Detectors - As in every season, have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors installed in your home, test them routinely on a monthly basis and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help. Also, remember to practice your home escape plan. www.usfa.dhs.gov

Holiday Cooking – Be sure not to leave cooking food unattended while preparing your holiday meal. In the event of a burn, run cool tap water over the affected area to soothe the skin. Then, cover the burn with a sterile dressing or clean cloth. This will greatly reduce the chances of infection. If the burn is severe and blistering occurs, seek medical attention or call 9-1-1 for more assistance.

The members of the San Rafael Fire Department wish you a safe and healthy Holiday Season and New Year.

Please contact the San Rafael Fire Dept. for further information at (415) 485-3304; visit us on the internet at: <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/departments/fire/>, or stop by your neighborhood San Rafael Fire Station anytime.

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