



MISSISSIPPI STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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State Fire Marshal

PRESS RELEASE

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Video shows danger of Christmas tree fire

Find video with subtitles here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSOkoe-J94g>

Find video without subtitles here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIFumQNug0E>

**Video should only be used with courtesy to the Mississippi Fire Marshal Office.*

Jackson, Miss. – In a video released by the Mississippi Fire Marshal Office, and recorded at the State Fire Academy, you can see how easily a dry Christmas tree catches fire. The video shows temperatures climbing from 55 degrees to 1200 degrees Fahrenheit. Soon, the walls and ceiling catch fire, the tree falls over, and nearby furniture catches fire.

The National Fire Protection Association says although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they're much more likely to be deadly than most other fires.

From 2011 to 2015, U.S. fire departments respond to an average of 200 home fires each year caused by Christmas trees. These fires caused an annual average of 6 civilian deaths, 16 civilian injuries, and \$14.8 million in direct property damage.

Fire safety is important year-round, but there are specific tips to keep in mind at Christmas to protect you and your family.

The State Fire Marshal Office along with the Mississippi Insurance Department recommends the following:

- Use holiday decorations made with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.
- Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings and replace damaged items before plugging lights in.
- Use lights approved by Underwriter's Laboratories.
- Do not overload extension cords.
- Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations.
- Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and make sure any lit candles in the room are placed away from tree branches.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source.
- When entertaining provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.
- Take the tree down when it becomes dry. Recycle it, use it as a fish shelter in a farm pond or put it out with the trash.
- Do not burn a tree in the fireplace. Heat may explode the wood and set the room on fire.
- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the United States.
- Have an approved fire extinguisher handy.
- Remove pans from the stove when not in use.
- Turn handles in so pots cannot be easily pulled off the stove.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

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