



Department of Public Health and Human Services

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Steve Bullock, Governor

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QUALITY ASSURANCE DIVISION CERTIFICATION BUREAU PROVIDER INFORMATION NOTICE - #101207

Christmas Trees and Holiday Decorations

The Life Safety Code considers Christmas trees highly flammable decorations. The Certification Bureau provides the following guidelines and precautions for the use of trees and decorations in health care facilities:

LIVE TREES:

- Live trees must be flocked with a fire retardant.
- A staff person must be designated to water the tree. Logs must be maintained to indicate the date and time the tree was watered and by whom.
- Lights are not permitted on flocked or aluminum/metal trees. Indirect flood lights may be used.
- Live trees must be located in a room that can be closed from corridors, (e.g. a dining room or lounge) and supervised by staff.
- Live trees must be limited to one per building.
- Live trees should be located near sprinkler heads or smoke detectors.

ARTIFICIAL TREES:

- Lights may be used on UL or FM approved artificial trees in accordance with manufacturer's directions.
- Artificial trees, factory wired with lights are acceptable if UL or FM tested.
- Lights on artificial trees should be unplugged at night.
- No limit is placed on the number or type of artificial trees in the building as long as they are UL or FM tested and approved.
- Only UL or FM approved multi-plug adaptors/power strips with surge/circuit breaker protection are acceptable

HOLIDAY LIGHTS:

- UL approved lights may be installed on the exterior of the building and on outside trees and shrubs. Exterior lighting circuits must have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection.
- Only UL approved multi-plug adaptors with surge/circuit breaker protection are acceptable.

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS:

- The use of live evergreen boughs for decoration inside a health care facility is prohibited. The exception is floral arrangements, using evergreens in a water source.
- Wrapping paper is combustible and must not be used to decorate doors and wall surfaces.
- Open flames and/or candles are prohibited.

If you have any questions regarding safety issues, please contact the Certification Bureau at (406) 444-2099 or email the Bureau at MTSSAD@mt.gov.