

Certification Bureau  
Compliance Readiness Bulletin  
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**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** [Trees must be fresh cut]:

- 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** [Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM)]:

- 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](mailto:MTSSAD@mt.gov).

For additional Holiday and winter heating safety tips, please visit [www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education)