



STAYING SAFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Winter and the holiday season are right around the corner, bringing with it an increased risk of home fires. The Alexandria Fire Department encourages the community to take the necessary precautions to keep your family, homes and businesses safe during the winter and upcoming holidays.

HEATING SAFETY



Heating equipment is the leading cause of home fire deaths, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. Take these simple steps to safely heat your homes during the winter.

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, such as a furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip. Make sure heaters have an automatic shut off, so if it tips over, it shuts off.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires. Four times as many home cooking fires happen on Thanksgiving than on any other day of the year. Prepare for your Thanksgiving feast by staying aware and by using these safety tips.

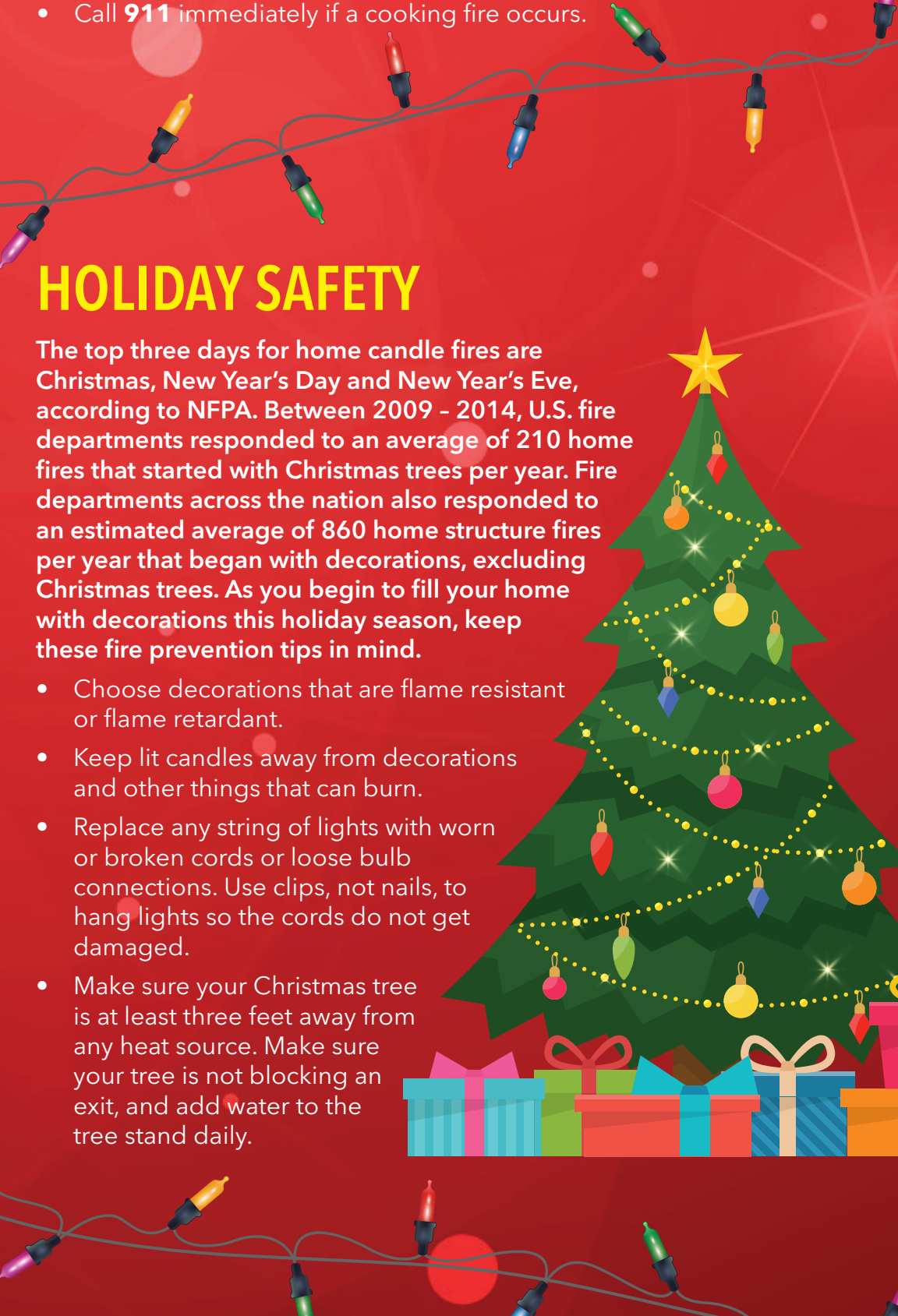
- Make sure ovens and stoves are clean and free of grease accumulation prior to use. Do not leave stoves, ovens, or any other heating and cooking material unattended.
- Keep children away from the stove. Grease and other cooking items can splash, which can cause serious burns.
- Handle all hot cooking pans and utensils with proper oven mitts and pot holders to prevent burns. Once cooking is done, make sure all cooking appliances are off.
- Call **911** immediately if a cooking fire occurs.



HOLIDAY SAFETY

The top three days for home candle fires are Christmas, New Year's Day and New Year's Eve, according to NFPA. Between 2009 - 2014, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 210 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. Fire departments across the nation also responded to an estimated average of 860 home structure fires per year that began with decorations, excluding Christmas trees. As you begin to fill your home with decorations this holiday season, keep these fire prevention tips in mind.

- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Make sure your Christmas tree is at least three feet away from any heat source. Make sure your tree is not blocking an exit, and add water to the tree stand daily.



For more information,
visit alexandriava.gov/106769.



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