

# Celebrate Safely – Festive Fire Safety

## The 12 Days of Christmas

With the festive season just around the corner, here are 12 tips from the NSW Fire Brigades to help you celebrate safely as the year wraps up.

### ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



CHRISTMAS TREES

When choosing an artificial tree, look for a label marked fire retardant. Consider replacing your old artificial tree with a new fire retardant tree this year. Always use a tree stand to prevent trees toppling over. In the case of fresh trees, choose a tree that is fresh and not dropping needles. Ensure the tree stand for your fresh tree has a water reservoir and top it up daily.

### ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



SMOKE ALARMS

Every month  
Test ALL smoke alarms

Monthly

Every 6 months  
Vacuum dust from ALL smoke alarms

6 Monthly

Every year  
Change batteries unless smoke alarm is wired in

Yearly

Every 10 years  
Replace ALL smoke alarms

10 Years

### ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

Make sure that you don't put your decorations too close to open flames like candles and barbeques. Decorations can be highly flammable so make sure that if you are going to put decorations up, they are not able to fall or be knocked into open flames. Try to decorate your Christmas tree with flame retardant or non-combustible decorations.



DECORATIONS

### ON THE 8<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

More than half of all home fires start in the kitchen. During 2006/07, the NSW Fire Brigades attended 2,437 kitchen fires – or 56% of all residential fires. Never leave food to cook unattended either on the stove or in the microwave. If a kitchen fire occurs and you don't feel confident you can put it out, switch off the appliance, leave the premises and call the NSW Fire Brigades on Triple Zero (000) from a safe place.



KITCHEN SAFETY

### ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



ELECTRICAL

Don't overload power sockets or piggy back double adaptors for Christmas lights or ornaments. Only use lights and ornaments that meet Australian Standards (check packaging). Check lights before using and don't use if cords appear damaged. Make sure lights you use outside are designed for outdoor use. Switch off all electrical displays before going to bed.

### ON THE 9<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



BARBEQUE SAFETY

Barbeques are extremely popular over the festive season but can be dangerous. Always check that your barbeque is in safe working order before lighting it, look for fat build-up on the housing and ensure the gas bottle connections are secure. Always use a barbeque in a well ventilated area. Know what to do in case of an emergency.

### ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

Children watch and copy behaviours so set a good example around the home and educate that fire is a 'tool not a toy' to only be used by responsible adults. Keep lighters, matches and candles away from Christmas trees or other flammable material. Candles should be used in a safe position and extinguished if you leave the room and always before going to bed.



TOOL NOT A TOY

### ON THE 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

If you live in a bushfire prone area, keep the ground around your home clear of leaves and other litter and remember to clean your gutters regularly. If you have a garage or shed, remember to take extra care with any stored chemicals and fuels and always refuel mowers, edgers and other garden equipment when they are cold and in the open.



OUTDOORS

### ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



HAVE A PLAN

Be sure to have a written home 'Escape Plan' and practice it. Know two ways to get out of each room and if you use deadlocks, either leave the key in the door, or hang it on a hook nearby so in an emergency you can escape quickly. Make sure your family and visitors staying for the holidays know what to do in an emergency, and if they're from outside Australia, that they know to dial Triple Zero (000) in an emergency.

### ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS



ELDERLY HELP

Take time to check on elderly relatives, friends and neighbours this holiday season and make sure that they're fire prepared. Make sure that they have a home 'Escape Plan' and know what to do in case of an emergency.

### ON THE 6<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

Poor maintenance and incorrect usage of fire extinguishers in the home are two key reasons small house fires can spread, endangering lives and causing considerable damage to property. House fires can be brought under control within the first few minutes of ignition if attended to correctly with an extinguisher that works and is well maintained, as this can buy valuable time before the Fire Brigade arrives.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER

### ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

Be vigilant of pets bumping candles from their position. Pets are often left behind in an emergency, so make sure that your home 'Escape Plan' includes your pet. In case of an evacuation, plan on how to transport your pet safely. Make sure your pet has a collar which has a phone number. Inform fire fighters when they arrive of any possible missing pets.



PETS