



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30 Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 19, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT: Christy Poirier, Manager, Communications & Grants

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

VFRS: Don't let safety take a holiday this season

There is something cozy and special about the winter months and curling up with a good book or a cup of cocoa by the fireplace. But along with the warm glow of a fire and the addition of festive holiday décor throughout the house, Vernon Fire Rescue Services is offering simple and friendly reminders to help everyone avoid potential hazards this holiday season.

Christmas tree and holiday décor safety

- If using a real tree, choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched, and add water to the tree stand daily
- Make sure the tree is at least 1m away from all heat sources (like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights)
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Double check your lights.
- Replace any string of lights that has worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree
- Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so cords do not get damaged
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed

Heat source safety

- Keep anything that can burn at least 1m away from heating equipment (like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater)
- Have a 1m "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters
- Never use your oven to heat your home
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional
- Remember to turn off portable heaters when leaving the room or going to bed
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month