



## Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **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