

December  
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# Fire Line Newsletter

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## From the Balcony – Grateful Times

As we enter the final two months of 2021, we are gearing up for what will be an exciting and very fast-paced start to 2022 as we usher in six new firefighter/paramedics to increase our staffing for a fourth ambulance. This is an exciting time as we begin interviewing candidates for these positions. We will need our entire membership engaged, eager and willing to help train, mentor and lead our new hires in January; their success is our success. We have worked hard for this opportunity and we need to make it the very best it can be!

We've had a busy 2021 all while navigating through the lingering pandemic. We've managed to build out our training room at station one and as of this writing we are nearing its completion! It's been a long time without our training room, but I can tell you it's going to be well worth the wait. The space is incredible and will provide us so many more options for us and our community. Many thanks to Assistant Chief Gerritson for his work on this project! We will let AC Gerritson rest for a couple months before he embarks on replacing all of the concrete at station one in the spring.

Early in 2022, we will begin the process of finding Assistant Chief Janquart's successor as he announced his retirement

in the first half of 2022. I am sure we will have a strong list of candidates to compete for the position and our hope is to have the selection made well ahead of time to maximize a positive transition period.

As I have mentioned in previous years, Thanksgiving is my most treasured holiday where the gift of sharing gratitude with family and friends is the gift that we all share. I am truly grateful to be part of the Fond du Lac fire/Rescue family and my hope for all of you is this Thanksgiving is filled with an abundance of love, gratitude and thanks for all that we have.

*Until Next Month,  
Be Safe and Be Well*

**Fire Chief  
Peter O'Leary**



*thankful  
&  
grateful*

# FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE OPERATIONS

By: Assistant Chief  
Erick Gerritson



## *How to Handle Performance Reviews*

**Things they don't teach you in fire officer school: How to handle performance reviews: Fire service personnel matters are the single-most difficult issue to handle, even by a seasoned company officer.**

In preparation for taking the fire officer exam, candidates will focus their attention on reviewing department policies, operational procedures, the incident command system, current strategies and tactics, building construction, and a host of other items that are central to fireground operations. These are – and should be considered – the essential subjects that every company officer understands.

In contrast, topics like the importance of understanding human behavior, researching past disciplinary issues, knowing the discipline process of the department, and seeking mentorship for handling personnel issues are often overshadowed. But these interpersonal aspects of managing a crew are just as critical to your success as a fire officer as those fireground-focused topics.

Personnel matters are the single-most difficult issue to handle in the fire service, even by the most seasoned company officer. We, as firefighters, are creatures of habit. We appreciate traditions and dislike change. Our careers are built on significant events that can pass us by in the blink of an eye. The

outcomes of these events are determined by the decisions that our members make based on their training, experience and knowledge of the situation. All of these factors are what make performance evaluations so essential – even if it is one of those topics they don't teach you a great deal about in fire officer school.

### **TRACKING PROGRESS**

Tracking events and performances by those you now supervise is paramount in building a comprehensive personnel evaluation. Track and document events in a manner that best suit your needs. It is like buying a new pair of shoes – only you know what you like and only you can wear them with confidence.

There are often events within an event that get overlooked during an incident. Consider this main event: As my crew and I were leaving the station one hot summer day, we came across an elderly man in a wheelchair who was having trouble negotiating the roadway and sidewalk. Recognizing him as a resident in a nearby senior living community, the senior firefighter asked to get out so he could assist him onto the sidewalk and out of the roadway. So, we blocked traffic, and he proceeded to move the gentleman safely out of traffic.

The event within the event came when the firefighter had already taken a bottle of

water out of the cooler in preparation to give to the person (great foresight). And then the real event occurred when the firefighter asked for us to follow him five blocks so that he could push the man home while they consumed the bottled water. The firefighter delivered the resident home and assisted them into the facility safely.

This series of events exemplifies crew members acting based on their training, their sensitivity to others, and their role as a public servant. That firefighter could have just assisted the person onto the sidewalk and jumped back in the engine, and we could have driven off and accepting the job as complete.

As the supervisor, I acknowledged the event and the events within the event that made this moment significant for our crew that day. I documented the event in preparation for it to be one of the shining moments to highlight during this member's evaluation period. This firefighter was soon promoted to fire engineer, and I like to think this event had something to do with it.

### **SCHEDULING CONSISTENT REVIEWS**

Making an appointment and scheduling to meet with your crew members, both as a team and independently, will validate the performance evaluation period when the formal meeting occurs. The

## How to Handle Performance Reviews... Continued



timing of these meetings should be centered on documenting what has occurred most recently. For example, a significant event like the one above is a good opportunity to bring the team together to discuss the event and then also follow up on with a scheduled one-on-one meeting.

Tradition is sacred to all firefighters. As a fire officer, you can develop that internal crew tradition of meeting consistently to bring to light the crew members' performance and to help them develop as highly respected firefighters and human beings. Take the opportunity to set time aside and talk with those you supervise on a regularly scheduled basis.

### USING WRITING TOOLS

We have all read our performance evaluation that sums up our last year in a couple of paragraphs and noticed that it has some obvious grammatical errors and misspelled words. Rather than look back as to why, let us move our vision to the future. Writing is a skill that is developed through mentorship, peer reviews, online tools, and the dedicated time for multiple writing/review sessions.

The performance evaluation training that agencies provide usually consists of a PowerPoint session on the finer points on what separates "Excellent" from "Good" and "Good" from "Satisfactory." Once again,

the things they do not teach you are how to write a comprehensive performance evaluation that provides a snapshot of the past year and captures these performance levels.

Writing a sincere and descriptive performance evaluation is the responsibility of the fire officer. Taking from notes about the employee over the past year, generating an outline of the year, and creating a draft version are the keys to creating a solid foundation from which to start an evaluation. It's best to use an online writing tool that can check for grammatical errors and misspelled words throughout the writing process.

Next, I suggest following up with a peer review from another respected officer utilizing Microsoft Word's "Comments" feature under "Track Changes." It is also likely your peers have firsthand knowledge of the events mentioned in the evaluation and can provide comments that substantiate or even expand on the details in the performance evaluation draft.

Now you can start on the final draft. This next writing session will provide you with better insight as to what you have previously written. Make sure to give yourself adequate time so that you can focus solely on writing the final draft.

After you have completed the final draft version,

you must review it for incident numbers, correct spelling of names, event names, and a host of other specific titles that validate the employee's performance. A word of warning: Resist the urge to send this version directly to your superior, just in case there is a grammar or punctuation error you missed. Best practice is to review your final version and then run it through the online writing tool of your preference. Now you can submit it to your boss for review.

### DELIVERING THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The delivery of the employee performance evaluation should not surprise your crew member. The evaluation packet should be viewed as a summary of all the (significant) events that the member was part of and their actions. As part of the tradition you have already established, build out an appointment with the employee and make sure that the environment is comfortable – and by all means neutral.

What do I mean by "neutral"? This is a place where you have not delivered any discipline that is free from distractions, and is soundproof. Fire stations are known to have ears, and it is best that you ensure that what is said in the room stays in the room. Confidentiality is critical to the process and should be taken seriously. Allow

the employee to read the evaluation alone. Standing over the employee while they review the information will prevent the member from being able to absorb the information.

### YOUR CREDIBILITY IS ON THE LINE

When you write an employee performance evaluation that is short, subjective, and filled with grammatical errors and misspelled words, you risk eroding the respect your crew members have for you. Remember, you have total control over what is delivered in writing and can avoid these types of mistakes.

Setting time aside to talk with crewmembers about significant events, documenting them accordingly, and then getting them into the final draft is the foundation for peer respect. There is no better time to start than now. Write down those actions that were taken by your crew members most recently and work back using your logbook as a resource.

You will see that your writing skills will rise to the next level through the process, you will gain respect from your crew members, and you will have future company officers seek your guidance in personnel issues.

Reference- David Hernandez,  
[www.firerecsue1.com](http://www.firerecsue1.com)

***Until Next Month...  
Stay Safe!!***



## Operations by the Numbers

October, 2021	By Month		Year-To-Date	
PREVENTION	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
Total Inspections	230	138	2003	2136
Total Defects	133	62	1005	870
SUPPRESSION				
Alarms Involving Fire	14	7	105	92
Fire Mutual Aid Given	0	1	11	14
Fire Mutual Aid Received	0	0	3	5
Service/Good Intent Calls	44	37	482	476
False Alarms/False Calls	26	41	265	290
Other Calls	12	8	149	111
Total Fire Alarms & Calls	96	94	1001	969
EMS				
Total Ambulance Calls	583	522	5233	5337
Total Fire/EMS Responses	679	615	6234	6307
Fire Property Loss	\$104,600.00	\$35,000.00	\$691,900.00	\$395,168.00
Fire Contents Loss	\$57,110.00	\$15,525.00	\$326,066.00	\$171,465.00
Engine Assisted EMS Calls	233	213	2254	2082



## Current Status of New Construction

- River Hills Mixed Use Development on S. Main St. – *Building 12 is under construction*
- Forest Mall / TJ Max – *Complete*
- Country Lane Cottages – *101, 201, 301 complete 401 still under construction*
- Sister Catherine Drexel Homeless Shelter – *Under Construction*
- Hobby Lobby / Big Lots – *Construction/Renovation has started*
- BCI Burke – *Addition beginning*
- Summit Auto – *Addition will be starting soon*
- Brooke Street Lofts – *Planning Phase*
- Kwik Trip (Schreiners) – *Demolition Started*
- Taco Johns (West Johnson) – *Under Construction*



# The Code Summary

By: Assistant Chief Todd Janquart

## Columbia University Researchers Testing Opioid Use Disorder Vaccine

NEW YORK — Thousands of people die each year because of an opioid-related overdose, and the coronavirus pandemic only fueled that fire, contributing to a record level of deaths in 2020.

Medications exist that can help treat opioid use disorders, but about half of those who take them end up relapsing after about six months. Now, researchers at Columbia University in New York are developing a vaccine they hope could prevent opioid overdose deaths by blocking the drugs' ability to reach the brain.



The vaccine is designed to produce antibodies to oxycodone, a commonly abused prescription opioid normally used to treat pain. (Photo/NIDA) The team is enrolling up to 24 volunteers who are active opioid users but are not taking medications to treat their disorder in an early clinical trial

designed to determine if the vaccine is "well tolerated and safe." Researchers will also study whether the shot triggers the production of sufficient antibodies that could prevent the drug from seeping into the brain.

If the vaccine proves safe, then the team will add another 21 participants. It's the first experimental vaccine designed for the treatment of opioid use disorder to be tested in the U.S.

"A vaccine that lasts for several months, given in combination with any of [the existing] medications, could help many more people beat their addiction and potentially protect them from an overdose death if a patient relapses," Sandra Comer, principal investigator of the clinical trial and a professor of neurobiology at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, said in a news release.

### HOW IS THE VACCINE DESIGNED TO WORK?

The vaccine is designed to produce antibodies to oxycodone, a commonly abused prescription opioid normally used to treat moderate to severe pain.

If a vaccinated person were to relapse, the antibodies their body generated would attach to the drug and block it from reaching the brain. This means the person would not feel the typical euphoric high felt after taking opioids.

The same blockage could also prevent overdose deaths, researchers say. When oxycodone reaches the brain, it can cause "respiratory depression," a disorder in which breathing becomes slow and ineffective. The vaccine would ideally stop this process from happening.

The vaccine cannot interfere with other medications used to treat opioid use disorder because it's designed to specifically target oxycodone. Researchers are working on developing similar vaccines that target other opioids with unique chemical makeups, such as heroin and fentanyl. The shot also cannot interfere with naloxone, a drug used to revive consciousness in people who have overdosed.

### HOW WILL THE CLINICAL TRIAL WORK?

So far, preclinical studies in animals given oxycodone show the vaccine protects against "toxicity and signs of overdose,

such as respiratory depression." It also reduced the animals' desire to consume the drug on their own.

Clinical trials will involve people who are ongoing opioid users not receiving other treatments for their use disorder. Researchers will administer non-lethal doses of oxycodone to volunteers housed in an inpatient center after they receive the vaccine and monitor their responses to the drug for several weeks. The team will then analyze volunteers' drug use behavior "on an outpatient basis."

One group of participants will receive a placebo shot and two other groups will get a low or high dose of the vaccine.

Meanwhile, researchers at the University of Minnesota will monitor blood samples from clinical trial volunteers "to better understand how the vaccine works."

*Article from the 10/7/2021 online edition of EMS1.com.*

*Katie Camero  
The Charlotte Observer*

If you don't like the road you're walking, start paving another one.

*Dolly Parton*



### ***Congratulations! Engineer Paul Loderhose***

Congratulations on 30 years of service to  
Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue and the citizens of Fond du Lac!

Paul began his career at Fire/Rescue on November 4, 1991.



## *Happy December Birthday*


*Brian Winter • Eric Rebedew • Chief O'Leary  
Nick Czaja • Bobby Scott*



### **In Their Own Words...**

This section of the newsletter will feature a note or card received from the people we serve. Whether it is during an ambulance call, fire call, or a public education assignment, the members of Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue are always dedicated to making their contact with area residents a positive experience.

Dear Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue members,  
Thank you for taking your time to come to our  
Holy Family Oktoberfest event. We appreciate  
you showing our parishioners and community members  
your firetruck and bringing fun firefighter hats  
for them. We know people greatly enjoyed it -  
especially the children! We are blessed to  
have you in our community and thank you for your service.



## *Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.*

By: Assistant Chief of Training/Safety  
James Knowles III

### ***Easing the Strain of the 2 1/2 –inch Hose***

The medium-diameter hose coming off the bed often indicates that a fire is beyond our means to extinguish quickly, a fire is getting out of control, or there is a marked tactical change from offensive to defensive. In other words, except for fires that are clear-cut 2½-inch candidates from the start, it is rarely a sign that things are going our way. In addition, many times when the 2½-inch is being deployed—not for exposure protection but to affect extinguishment—crews have already been working under arduous conditions for some time.

Fires in frame dwellings (row or otherwise), occupied multiple dwellings, or small- to mid-size commercial occupancies that require deploying this hoseline all generally have one thing in common: a very significant amount of fire. You can expect in such instances that the fire has damaged, degraded, and dismantled much of the building's contents and structural members. Even in an "open floor" plan building, we expect to struggle with that 2½-inch through a significant debris field. With that in mind, we can do a few things to make the deployment of 200-plus gallons per minute (gpm) more efficient and easier.

#### **Recognizing the Struggle**

The phrase "Big fire, big water" is mostly taken as gospel, but what is often overlooked regarding that statement is that there is often a correlation between the need for "big" water and the struggle of getting it to where it needs to

Realizing that you may have an exceedingly difficult time getting big water to the fire can be a game changer. As mentioned above, many times, we are not deploying the line over a nice, neat, unencumbered concrete floor. In stores, we are often obstructed by knocked-over racks, burnt-out display cases, and fallen drop ceiling tiles. In residences, we face turned-over furniture; tight turns; pack-rat conditions; personnel clogging the attack path; and, again, destroyed building components. These factors often combine to produce a situation where the fire gains headway while we struggle to get that big line into an advantageous operating position. "Calling the stretch," as it is often referred to, is not enough in these instances. More important is understanding the problem before you and taking the all-important first step in making it better: getting help. An adequately staffed engine crew can advance this line in a moderate fashion under good conditions while being unencumbered. In reality, the crew will be bogged down and in need of help.

Envision any building in your district that would be a prime candidate for such a problem. Many times, the apartments are further subdivided and packed to the brim.

A large body of fire in a store and one floor above would be a textbook (but maybe not real-life) indicator of calling for that 2½-inch; if it were for mere "punching power," the call would be correct. However, the immense struggle in traversing such a mess just to

get big water to the seat could be nearly insurmountable for even an adequately staffed engine.

Sidestepping the debate of what line gets put into play here, the point is that if the call for the big line gets made in such an instance, the attack engine needs help. The adjacent engine can help stretch in, clear debris from the path, uncover the seat, or otherwise do *anything* necessary to get that tank water onto the seat of the fire. For a large body of fire, the second engine, which generally establishes a water supply, may have to wait to do so or call on an arriving unit to assist the pump operator in laying the water. This potentially costly maneuver is justified for the mere fact that establishing positive water is utterly meaningless if the attack line cannot get any of the water at the fire area.

Continued water is necessary for the ongoing operation, the safety of crews, timely extinguishment, protection of search operations, securing exits, and the like, so make every effort in this regard, but the "first 500" belong solely to those who may be inside and need our undivided and immediate assistance, be it at the seat or for protecting rescues. If the first engine needs help getting those tank gallons to where they are most needed, as can be the case with the 2½-inch, the second-arriving crew needs to help—immediately!

The first-arriving ladder

company, being dedicated to search, entry, ventilation, location, and life hazard, is often stretched thin to begin with. That said, if they see or hear that the first line being put into play is a big one, they should make every effort to assist in its deployment so long as it does not take away from the dedication to life hazard.

#### **Managing the Struggle**

Continued operation on the offensive side of a fire with the 2½-inch line is backbreaking labor. Struggling to pull the line and flow more than 200 gpm is no easy task. As important as it is to stretch wide around bends, minimize turns, and keep the nozzle at arm's length with the 1¾-inch, it is exponentially more important to do so with the 2½-inch.

Before entering a large apartment, flake the line nearly to the end of the hall opposite the direction of your anticipated travel before you open the door. For example, if the large line is staged to attack at a common landing, and the officer or a ladder crew knows that you will be traveling primarily left behind the door, bow and flake the charged line as far as possible down the right side of the hall.

Another example would be a large storefront that is far longer along the street than it is deep. Seeing a large body of fire toward one side would necessitate bowing and flaking a long distance at the





## Easing the Strain of a 2 ½ - inch Hose...Continued

**Source:** Degnan, A. (2021). Easing the strain of the 2 ½-inch hose. Fire Engineering. Retrieved from: [https://www.fireengineering.com/firefighting/easing-the-strain-of-the-2-12-inch-hose/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=fe\\_daily\\_newsletter&utm\\_campaign=2021-10-28](https://www.fireengineering.com/firefighting/easing-the-strain-of-the-2-12-inch-hose/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=fe_daily_newsletter&utm_campaign=2021-10-28)

street opposite the direction of the push. Charging at the door and trying to make a hard right/left turn will not do. We can overcome these oversights with the small line but not so with the 2½-inch.

A charged advance must occur in unison more than ever with this line; it sounds fairly simple, but it is often lost amidst the cacophony and mayhem of a fire. Whereas an advance with a 1¾-inch line feels almost like a continuous movement, with members crawling along in fluid motion, a 2½-inch advance line across his chest with his left leg slightly raised and the trailing line under his crotch. His right leg is tucked under his left thigh so that his shin rests on the line. The second member on the line, perhaps half a length back, mimics this maneuver, and members advance together; they will be using their core and hips to move the line as they push forward and pull their hips and trail leg with them. This will pay big dividends in terms of how long your team will be able to operate in the immediately dangerous to life or health atmosphere.

To have two members advance smoothly in such a fashion takes some doing, but it is superior to pulling with arms, yelling for more line, and trying to just muscle the big line over long distances. Where air conservation matters, so too does working smartly.

### Flowing Fluidly

A well-charged 2½-inch line with a smooth bore 1¼-inch tip can discharge upward of 225 gpm. Without getting bogged down with the math, we know that the nozzle reaction on a smooth bore is considerably less than with a combo nozzle—that is, until the point

of over-pressurization. Once the smooth bore becomes over-pressurized, the nozzle reaction grows at a rate that is alarmingly faster than that of an over-pressurized fog counterpart. This is important to recognize with the big line because, at many large-scale fires, engines are operating with multiple lines of multiple diameters with varying tip sizes. Different mains, variances in the pumps, broken transfer valves, and any number of factors can contribute to cause a wide disparity in the “push back” of the 2½-inch. Even the most conscientious pump operator can sometimes be left powerless to control what is being thrown into that line.

On the other end, the most robust nozzle operator cannot meet every need with “gate it down.” Even a line flowing properly over a long period of time becomes very difficult to operate. Sitting on a 2½-inch in the street, wetting down an exposure, and not moving is one thing; attacking offensively with it is another thing entirely.

By placing the strain of the advance on the body’s larger muscles, we can achieve a similar effect with flowing the nozzle. To do this, all that is needed is a hose strap (yes, they still have their place) or a piece of webbing and your two-point seated bailout harness. The nozzle operator can wrap the line just behind his hip and clip it directly into his harness. Note that this move works far more securely if the rated harness has a large carabiner you can clip directly into the handle of the hose strap or piece of webbing; the backup member can do the same if needed.

The nozzleman then braces himself against the nozzle reaction; in many instances, he

can achieve some flowing during the advance. In fact, advancing in short pushes this way works quite well, especially when advancing upward or trying to flow the line upward from a stairwell. With the line directly affixed to your harness, the nozzle reaction is absorbed and distributed more by your core muscles. Put simply, you will exert better control over the line and be able to move it more easily.

Keep in mind that securing the line to yourself *merely to advance it* should not often be needed, but bracing against a considerable nozzle reaction, hitting the fire, shutting down quickly, and moving again could be needed and very helpful.

It is also worth noting that affixing yourself to the line carries with it some degree of hazard. Should the nozzle be lost or the line burst, you could be “going for a ride.” If the line slides down a hole in the floor, be cautious so as not to go with it. For reasons like these, it is good practice to limit “clipping in” for when you are nearly stationary, are without significant help, or have very good visibility and no apparent problems before you. Again, communication with the entire crew is going to be critical in such instances.

### Gating Down: Not an Option

Other than dealing with a totally out-of-control line that cannot be reduced in pressure though outside communication, gating down a 2½-inch is even more problematic than the smaller line. For starters, partially closing the bail of a smooth bore creates more turbulent flow; the water flow narrows toward the tip, and the water bounces off itself more than it should. The result is a “spitting”

action, a weaker stream, and less gallons but a more manageable line; this is mostly unacceptable. The larger line was selected *specifically because more water was needed*, so gating it down often defeats the purpose in struggling to get more water where it is needed.

Gating down a fog nozzle decreases the force with which the water is thrown into the baffle. Whether on a straight stream or fog, the result is the same: less water when more is needed. Saying “I can’t hold it” means you need to get help or help yourself in one of the aforementioned ways, not “apply less water.” Applying less water is only acceptable if the other option is a lost line, no water, burst length, or injury.

Operations where the big line is the main player are anything but ordinary; they are large scale, need a tactical change from offensive to defensive, need extended operations, and so on. To the aggressive attack crew, realizing that an immediate knockout is not achievable is defeating. Realizing that an offensive operation is needed with larger lines requires that we bear down, work cohesively, take every advantage afforded to us, and work smarter.

We may not be able to change the “down-and-out” feeling that sometimes accompanies deploying these large lines, but we can manage our effectiveness with them. Sometimes, we need the line that is the hardest to work at the hardest of fires.



# Fire Prevention

## *The Bureau Never Sleeps*

By: Division Chief Garth Schumacher



### **Holiday Safety**

Merry Christmas to all of you and I hope you had a great Thanksgiving Holiday with family and friends. If some of you are like me, the kids had me set up Christmas décor at the same time that Halloween decorations were being taken down. This usually goes against my method of thinking as I like to at least wait until the turkey is digested before thinking about getting out the Christmas stuff. That and the fact that setting the decorations up for Christmas gives the dogs that much more time to eat the shepherds on the nativity scene. Last year the dogs ate all the ornaments on the tree that they could reach, we ended up with a star on the top and some twinkling lights. The year before that it was the cord that powered the lights, we will see what this year brings!

To get to the fire prevention portion of this article, we often

decorate our homes with all the holiday décor that our kids or spouses want, and that being said we do open ourselves up to some dangers along with that. If we set up a real tree we need to make sure that it is properly watered and monitored as to the degree at which the tree is drying out. A tree that is too dry is obviously ripe for a wildfire inside the home and that would be devastating. Another aspect is the manner in which we use electrical for all of those flashy holiday lights. I have to take into account the dog's and their role when lighting and decorating to make sure they aren't eating cords or swallowing glass ornaments they seem to enjoy consuming. Like I mentioned our dog ate the cord one year, I am glad that they didn't start a fire and also glad I noticed the chewed cord before

someone touched it and felt the spirit of Christmas surge through their body. Keep in mind all the potentials when you are decorating, there can be plenty we don't think of.

Candles are another large holiday decoration, whether we light them or just have them as centerpieces we need to observe some caution. Years ago when I was little (younger) my sister and I lit candles at my mother's request right around the Christmas season. A short while later a smoke alarm sounded and we ran to see what was going on, when we arrived at the front room we noticed that the wall and a wicker basket set as a decoration was on fire. My mother promptly grabbed a fire extinguisher from the kitchen cabinet and was able to extinguish the basket and the wall that had been on

fire. I can tell you from experience that dry chemical extinguishers are very effective if used properly, when used in a room that size however, your likely to get a healthy dose of dry chemical that makes you re-think whatever you did prior to that point. In any case like I mentioned before, try and anticipate the possibilities of what could happen with your particular decorations and your current demographics in the home. Christmas is meant to be a special time of year but all too often it is met with tragedy or inconvenience for some which in most cases is completely avoidable.

*Until next month, stay safe, and I hope you and your families have an enjoyable and safe holiday season!*



#### **HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING**

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.



#### **HOLIDAY DECORATING**

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.



# Christmas Tree Safety



As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.



## PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



## PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



## LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with 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.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



## After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

## FACTS

- ! **Almost one third** of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes more than **one in every five** of the fires.



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# Seguridad del árbol de Navidad



En estas fiestas, sea consciente de los posibles incendios al decorar las salas. Una pequeña llama que llegue a un árbol de Navidad puede crecer muy rápido.



## ELEGIR EL ÁRBOL

- » Elija un árbol con agujas de pino verdes y frescas que no se desprendan con el contacto.



## COLOCAR EL ÁRBOL

- » Antes de colocar el árbol en la plataforma, corte 2" de la base del tronco.
- » Asegúrese de que el árbol esté alejado, al menos tres pies (un metro), de cualquier fuente de calor, como chimeneas, calefactores, velas, conductos de calefacción o lámparas.
- » Asegúrese de que el árbol no obstruya una salida.
- » Agregue agua a la base del árbol. Asegúrese de agregar agua a diario.



## ENCENDER EL ÁRBOL

- » Use luces avaladas por un laboratorio calificado. Algunas luces son solo para interiores y otras solo para exteriores.
- » Reemplace las guirnaldas luminosas que tengan cables deteriorados o rotos, o conexiones flojas en las bombillas. Lea las instrucciones del fabricante para saber el número de guirnaldas a colocar.
- » Nunca use velas encendidas para decorar el árbol.
- » Siempre apague las luces del árbol de Navidad antes de salir o al irse a dormir.



## Después de Navidad

Deshágase del árbol después de Navidad o cuando este se seque. Los árboles secos representan un peligro de incendio y no se deben dejar en el hogar o en el garaje, o afuera junto a la casa.

Consulte con su comunidad local para buscar un programa de reciclaje.

Entre al hogar las luces eléctricas exteriores después de las fiestas para prevenir riesgos y darles más vida útil.

## DATOS

- ! **Uno de cada cuatro** incendios de árboles navideños en el hogar son provocados por problemas eléctricos.
- ! Aunque los incendios de árboles navideños no son comunes, cuando suceden, lo más probable es que sean graves.
- ! Una fuente de calor muy cerca del árbol provoca alrededor de **uno de cada cuatro** incendios.



Su fuente de información de **SEGURIDAD**

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