



## Christmas Tree Fire Safety Guidelines

Regulations are as directed by Howard County Fire & Rescue Services and the Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office.

**Live (Balled) Tree** Container grown, balled and burlapped; it has been up rooted and its roots are protected by an earthen ball. When watered they are safer since they don't dry out as quickly.

**Fresh Cut Trees** Evergreen trees that have been cut, sawn, or harvested with the intention of decorative display within a building.

**NO CUT OR BALLED TREES PERMITTED IN - ASSEMBLY, BOARD and CARE, DETENTION AND CORRECTIONS, DORMORTIES, EDUCATIONAL AND HOTELS**

**Sprinklered Buildings** - Cut trees are allowed in Apartments, Business, Day-care, Industrial, Mercantile, Storage and One-Two Family dwellings

**Non sprinklered Buildings** - Trees are permitted in Apartments, Industrial, Storage and One-Two Family dwellings

**Balled trees** - Are permitted in Apartments Buildings, Business, Daycare, Health Care, Industrial, Lodging and Rooming, Mercantile, Storage and One-Two Family dwellings

1. The Fire Marshal shall: approve the tree placement (if necessary); limit the number of trees; and order the removal of any tree if it poses a hazard to life or safety.
2. The Office of the Fire Marshal *strongly encourages* artificial trees.

### Fresh cut trees must meet the following:

- Not be more than ten (10) feet tall. (*Excluding Tree Stand*)
- The bottom end of the trunk shall be cut off with a straight fresh cut at least 2" above the end prior to placing in a stand to allow the tree to absorb water.
- The tree must be placed in a suitable stand with water. The water level must be maintained above the fresh cut and checked at least daily.
- Trees shall be removed from the building immediately upon evidence of dryness.

### Fire Safety Standards for Holiday Decorating

- Trees must not be placed near exits; nor can they obstruct any exit.
- Decorative lights should not be used on a metal artificial tree because of the potential electrical shock hazard. Spotlights may be used for illumination. Only decorative lighting meeting approval of a recognized testing lab shall be used on any trees or decorations.
- Electrical extension cords must be used in accordance with safe electrical practices. Do not locate across corridors or aisles unless suitably protected and secured by approved protective guard.
- Open flames such as candles, lanterns, fireplaces, kerosene heaters, and gas fired heaters must not be located on or near Christmas trees or decorations of any type.