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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Wildfire Preparedness is Year-Round:
Make a Holiday Safety List and Check It Twice!

SANTA FE, NM – Don't forget fire safety as you prepare for holiday festivities this December. Before you deck the halls, it's a good idea to take a little extra time to make sure happy holidays don't turn into a tragedy. Concluding our 2021 "Wildfire Preparedness is Year-Round" campaign, the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department's (EMNRD) Forestry Division and its partners' message for December is "Make a holiday safety list and check it twice!"

According to the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA), Christmas trees are responsible for an estimated 160 home fires annually, causing \$10 million in property damage. Fortunately, fatalities and injuries from Christmas tree fires are relatively low with an annual average of two deaths and 12 injuries. Candles cause 45% of home decoration fires in December, with Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day the worst days of the year for candle fires.

Simple steps on this holiday checklist will ensure that you and your home don't become a statistic.

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that don't fall off when touched, cut 2 inches from the base when you get it home, and add water to the tree stand daily. One quart of water per inch of trunk diameter is a good rule of thumb. This NFPA [video](#) illustrates how quickly a dry tree can go up in flames.
- If you prefer an artificial tree, make sure you purchase a flame-resistant model.

- Don't place your tree too close to electrical or heat sources, including fireplaces, radiators, and candles.
- Check your Christmas lights for frayed wires or excessive wear before you hang them, and don't exceed the maximum number of light strands that can be connected.
- Touch test your extension cords after plugging them in and make sure they are not hot. Don't tuck them under the tree skirt or area rugs.
- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles. Never leave a burning candle unattended, and always unplug tree lights before you leave the house or go to bed.
- If your Christmas tree catches fire, call 911. Even if you extinguish the blaze, it's best to have professional firefighters assess the situation and make sure it's safe.
- Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly.
- Finally, always have a home escape plan ready and practice it with your family and guests.

The [New Mexico Forestry Division](#) is working with the [Carson, Cibola, and Santa Fe National Forests](#), [Forest Stewards Guild](#), [Fire Adapted NM](#), the [National Park Service](#) and [Bureau of Land Management New Mexico State Office](#) to build a 2021 wildfire preparedness calendar and share the message across multiple platforms, including social media, webinars and community events. Bookmark the [wildfire preparedness webpage](#) to follow the campaign throughout the year.

As we close out 2021, we wish you safe and happy holidays. Stay tuned for our 2022 campaign.



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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

<http://www.emnrd.nm.gov>

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Deck the Halls with Fire Safety



2021

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