

## **Holiday Decorations**

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

During holiday periods, University departments often decorate offices and other work areas. To prevent fire-related losses and injuries, University personnel are responsible for observing the following fire regulations. University fire safety personnel monitor displays during holiday periods. Direct questions to the WSU Fire Marshal; telephone 509-335-8548.

### **FLAMMABLE MATERIALS**

Flame retardant paper, cardboard, and wood are allowed for construction of small decorative displays.

- Extensive or elaborate paper, cardboard, or wood displays are not permitted.
- Untreated paper, cardboard, or wood displays are not permitted.

### **Purchase**

Purchase flame retardant construction materials from art stores, hardware stores or lumber yards.

Fire retardants may be purchased to apply to flammable materials used for decorations. Contact the WSU Fire Marshal for product names, ratings and specifications.

### **Paper Fire Retardant**

The WSU Fire Marshal recommends the following as an easy-to-make, economical fire retardant for paper.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup ammonia sulfate (from the garden store)
- 6 Tablespoons boric acid (from the druggist)
- 4 Tablespoons borax (from the grocer)
- 3 cups water

Stir the first three ingredients into the water until dissolved. Brush or spray the solution onto the paper's surface. Allow the solution to dry. The treated paper will wrinkle and discolor.

The WSU Fire Marshal prohibits the use of the following materials for decorative purposes: styrofoam, evergreen boughs, straw, hay, cotton, corn stalks, dry leaves, and other similar materials.

### **OPEN FLAMES AND CANDLES**

Open flames and candles may not be used as decorations at any time in University buildings.

### **PLACEMENT OF DECORATIONS**

Decorations are not to disguise, cover, or interfere with any safety device, e.g., fire extinguishers, standpipe hoses, exit signs, fire sprinklers, and alarm boxes.

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### **PLACEMENT OF DECORATIONS (cont.)**

Decorations (including trees) are not permitted in emergency exit routes, i.e., stairwells, corridors, and elevator foyers.

**EXCEPTION:** Flame retardant or noncombustible decorations may be placed on bulletin boards on the walls of corridors.

Decorations of any composition are not permitted in elevators, elevator foyers, or stairwells.

### **ELECTRICAL DECORATIONS**

See also *SPPM 2.72*.

Decorations that avoid electrical use by utilizing features that reflect ambient lighting for highlights are preferred. Where used, electrical decorations should be battery-powered and avoid connection to the building electrical systems.

Any electrical lighting decorations must utilize light-emitting diode (LED) lamps. Other lighting types, such as incandescent, halogen, fluorescent, etc., are prohibited.

Electrical decorations must be in good condition and approved by Underwriter Laboratories (U.L.).

Light bulbs or lighted decorations are not to contact combustible materials.

### **TREE CARE**

Prior to placement in a water base, cut the base of the tree at an angle at least one inch above the original cut. This preserves the tree's freshness and reduces flammability.

Place the freshly-cut tree in the container of water and maintain the water level throughout the display period.

Remove trees that start to dry out.

### **DECORATION DISPOSAL**

Place disposed decorations in a standard dumpster. Stairways, exits, and electrical/mechanical rooms are not safe places to store decorations prior to disposal (even temporarily).