

The Forest Stewards Guild
2019 Galisteo Street, Suite N7
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-983-8992

News Release

Media Contact: Eytan Krasilovsky

eytan@forestguild.org or 505-983-8992 ext. 707

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

SANTA FE, NM – Dec. 02, 2021 – 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 [Forest Stewards Guild](#), the [Fire Adapted New Mexico learning network \(FACNM\)](#), and our 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 [Forest Stewards Guild](#) and the [Fire Adapted New Mexico learning network](#) worked with the [Santa Fe](#), [Cibola](#) and [Carson](#) National Forests, [New Mexico Forestry Division](#), [National Park Service](#) and [Bureau of Land Management New Mexico State Office](#) to build a 2021 wildfire preparedness calendar. Bookmark the [wildfire preparedness webpage](#) on facnm.org to keep up to date with our monthly posts.

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

##

The Forest Stewards Guild is an equal opportunity employer