

## WINTERTIME FIRE SAFETY

The Tolland Fire Department, Inc. reminds everyone of the importance of fire safety in the home during the winter season.

### Remember the 4 "C's"

Insurance statistics indicate that more residential fires occur during the period from mid-December to mid-January each year than at any other time. As a precaution, residents are asked to keep these four "C's" in mind during this season: candles, children, chimneys and Christmas trees.

**Candles** should always be used with great care. Although they are popular as decorations at this time of year, make sure lighted candles are not placed near combustible materials, or where they can easily be reached by young hands. Candles should never be left burning unattended. When the last adult leaves the room, candles should be extinguished. Do not go to sleep with candles burning in a bedroom. Avoid using candles for light in a weather emergency. Battery operated lights are much safer.

**Children** need extra attention and guidance at this time of year. For young children the Holidays are an exciting time, and the glitter of a decorated tree, a lighted candle or a fire in the fireplace may present a novel temptation. Remind children that they need to stay away from all open flames, fireplaces, and portable heaters. Make sure that children have adequate supervision while the adults in the household are celebrating.

**Chimneys** get their heaviest use at this time of year. Before building that roaring Holiday fire, make sure the chimney is clean and in good repair. If you are not sure, don't light a fire until you have a professional check it out.

**Christmas trees** account for hundreds of fires annually. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. Well-watered trees significantly decrease the chances of a fire. A dry and neglected tree increases the risk of a serious fire.

Trees are safest when they are not left up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times. Check your tree lights to make sure they are in good shape with no frayed wires or damaged sockets. Do not place your tree close to a heat source such as a fireplace, portable heater or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. If you permit smoking inside your house, do not place ashtrays near the tree. Never place lighted candles on or near the tree.

The Tolland Fire Department, Inc. wishes everyone a safe and happy New Year!