

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Decorate Safely This Holiday Season**

JACKSON, Miss. – Fire safety is important year-round, but there are specific tips to keep in mind at Christmas to protect you and your family.

“Use holiday decorations made with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials. Carefully inspect new and used light strings and replace damaged items before plugging lights in. My biggest tip is do not overload extension cords,” said Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney

Additional fire safety measures:

- Use lights approved by Underwriter’s Laboratories.
- Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations.
- Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and make sure any lit candles in the room are placed away from tree branches.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source.
- Take the tree down when it becomes dry.
  - Recycle it, use it as a fish shelter in a farm pond or put it out with the trash.
  - Do not burn a tree in the fireplace. Heat may explode the wood and set the room on fire.

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