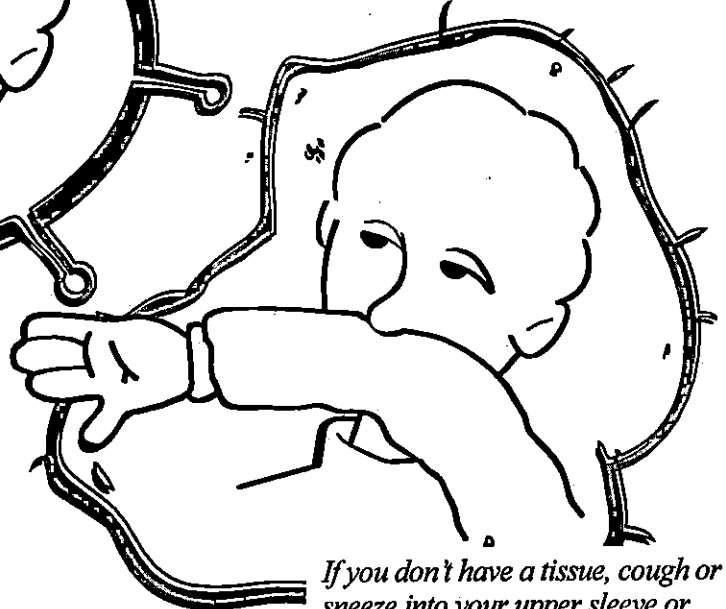
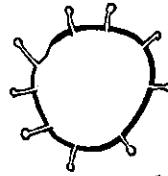
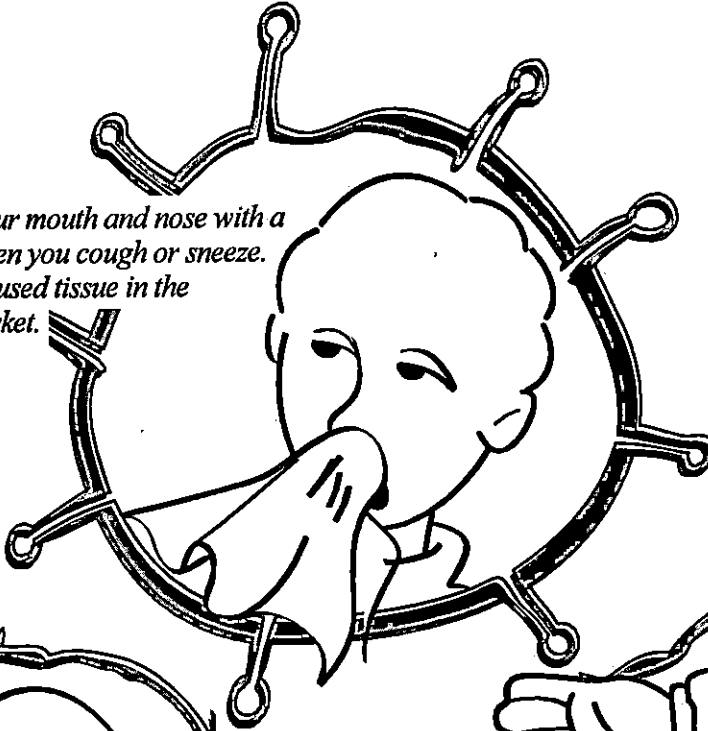


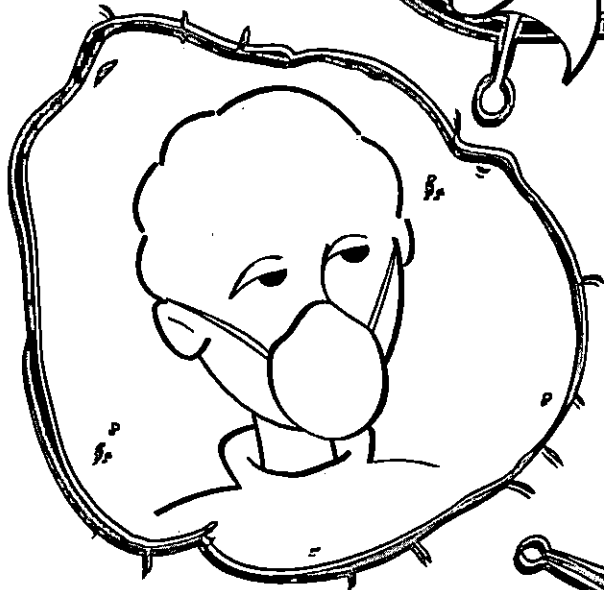
# Cover Cough

— Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick! —

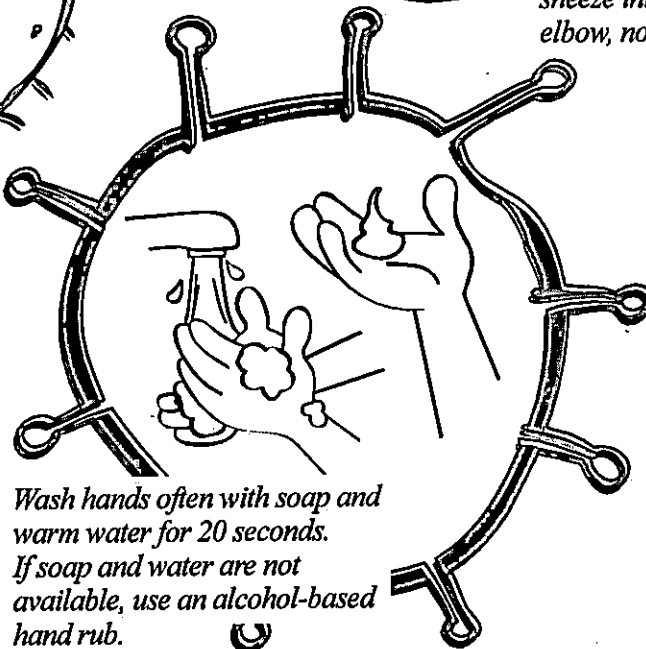
*Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put your used tissue in the waste basket.*



*If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.*



*You may be asked to put on a facemask to protect others.*



*Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.*



# Everyday Preventive Actions That Can Help Fight Germs, Like Flu



**CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting the flu:**

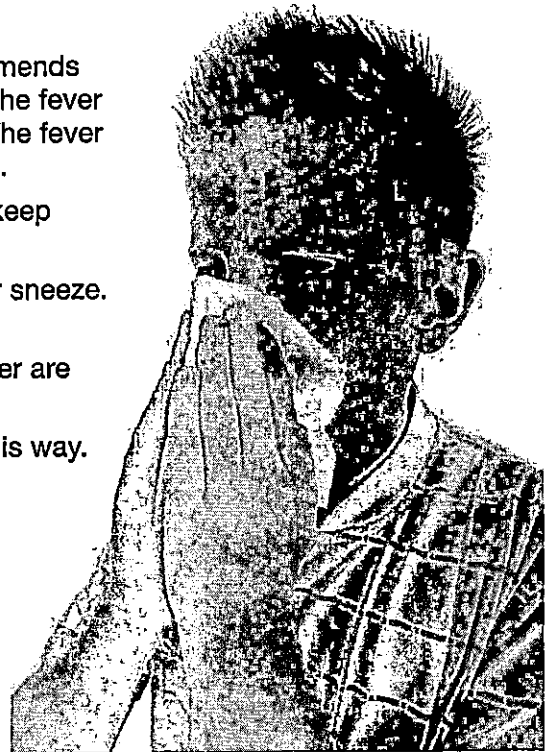
CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting influenza (flu). The first and most important step is to get a flu vaccination each year. But if you get the flu, there are prescription antiviral drugs that can treat your illness. Early treatment is especially important for the elderly, the very young, people with certain chronic health conditions, and pregnant women. Finally, everyday preventive actions may slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory (nose, throat, and lungs) illnesses, like flu. This flyer contains information about everyday preventive actions.

## ***How does the flu spread?***

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Flu viruses also may spread when people touch something with flu virus on it and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Many other viruses spread these ways too. People infected with flu may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick. That means you may be able to spread the flu to someone else before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick. Young children, those who are severely ill, and those who have severely weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for longer than 5-7 days.

## ***What are everyday preventive actions?***

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you (or your child) stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- If an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs, follow public health advice. This may include information about how to increase distance between people and other measures.



For more information, visit:  
**[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)**  
or call **1-800-CDC-INFO**



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Control and Prevention**

***What additional steps can I take at work to help stop the spread of germs that can cause respiratory illness, like flu?***

- Find out about your employer's plans if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
- Routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, keyboards, and phones, to help remove germs.
- Make sure your workplace has an adequate supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes.
- Train others on how to do your job so they can cover for you in case you or a family member gets sick and you have to stay home.
- If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible.



***What additional preventive actions can I take to protect my child from germs that can cause respiratory illness, like flu?***

- Find out about plans your child's school, child care program, or college has if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
- Make sure your child's school, child care program, or college routinely cleans frequently touched objects and surfaces, and that they have a good supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes on-site.
- Ask how sick students and staff are separated from others and who will care for them until they can go home.

**Everyday preventive actions can help slow the spread of germs that can cause many different illnesses and may offer some protection against the flu.**



# The Flu:

## A Guide For Parents

### FLU INFORMATION

#### What is the flu?

Influenza (the flu) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by influenza viruses. There are many different influenza viruses that are constantly changing. Flu viruses cause illness, hospital stays and deaths in the United States each year.

The flu can be very dangerous for children. Each year about 20,000 children younger than 5 years old are hospitalized from flu complications, like pneumonia.

#### How serious is the flu?

Flu illness can vary from mild to severe. While the flu can be serious even in people who are otherwise healthy, it can be especially dangerous for young children and children of any age who have certain long-term health conditions, including asthma (even mild or controlled), neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions, chronic lung disease, heart disease, blood disorders, endocrine disorders (such as diabetes), kidney, liver, and metabolic disorders, and weakened immune systems due to disease or medication.

Children with these conditions and children who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy can have severe illness from the flu.

#### How does the flu spread?

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might get the flu by touching something that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes or nose.

#### What are the symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of the flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults). Some people with the flu will not have a fever.

#### How long can a sick person spread the flu to others?

People with the flu may be able to infect others by shedding virus from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. However, children and people with weakened immune systems can shed virus for longer, and may be still contagious past 5 to 7 days of flu illness, especially if they still have symptoms.

### PROTECT YOUR CHILD

#### How can I protect my child against the flu?

To protect against the flu, the first and most important thing you can do is to get a flu vaccine for yourself and your child.

- ▶ Vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older.
- ▶ It's especially important that young children and children with long term health conditions get vaccinated. (See list of conditions in "How serious is the flu?")
- ▶ Caregivers of children with health conditions or of children younger than 6 months old should get vaccinated. (Babies younger than 6 months are too young to be vaccinated themselves.)
- ▶ Another way to protect babies is to vaccinate pregnant women. Research shows that flu vaccination gives some protection to the baby both while the woman is pregnant and for up to 6 months after the baby is born.

Flu vaccine is updated annually to protect against the flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to cause illness during the upcoming flu season. Flu vaccines are made using strict safety and production measures. Over the years, millions of flu vaccines have been given in the United States with a very good safety record.



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Control and Prevention

## Is there a medicine to treat the flu?

Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that can be used to treat and prevent influenza illness. They can make people feel better and get better sooner. Antivirals can mean the difference between having milder illness instead of very serious illness that could result in a hospital stay. Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics, which fight against bacterial infections. They work best when started during the first 2 days of illness. It's very important that antiviral drugs are used early to treat the flu in people who are very sick (for example, people who are in the hospital) or who are at high risk of having serious flu complications. Other people with flu illness may also benefit from taking antiviral drugs. These drugs can be given to children and pregnant women.

## What are some of the other ways I can protect my child against the flu?

In addition to getting vaccinated, you and your children can take everyday steps to help prevent the spread of germs.

These include:

- ▶ Stay away from people who are sick.
- ▶ If your child is sick with flu-like illness, try to keep him or her in a separate room from others in the household, if possible.
- ▶ CDC recommends that your sick child stay home for at least 24 hours after his or her fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after it has been used.
- ▶ Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- ▶ Clean and disinfect hard surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs, including bathroom surfaces, kitchen counters and toys for children. Clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.



*These everyday steps are a good way to reduce your chances of getting sick. However, a yearly flu vaccine is the best protection against flu illness.*

## IF YOUR CHILD IS SICK

### What can I do if my child gets sick?

Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids. If your child is 5 years and older and does not have other health problems and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed.

Children younger than 5 years of age – especially those younger than 2 years old – and children with certain chronic conditions, including asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system, at high risk of serious flu-related complications. If your child is at high risk for flu complications, call your doctor or take them to the doctor right away if they develop flu-like symptoms.

### What if my child seems very sick?

Even previously healthy children can get very sick from the flu.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids. If your child is 5 years or older and does not have other health problems and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed:

- ▶ Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- ▶ Bluish or gray skin color
- ▶ Not drinking enough fluids (not going to the bathroom or not making as much urine as they normally do)
- ▶ Severe or persistent vomiting
- ▶ Not waking up or not interacting
- ▶ Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- ▶ Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- ▶ Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough.

### Can my child go to school, day care or camp if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children or caregivers.

### When can my child go back to school after having the flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C) or higher.

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For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) or [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or call 800-CDC-INFO

# Christmas Tree Safety



As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.



## PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



## PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



## LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



## After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

## FACTS

- ! Almost one third of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes more than one in every five of the fires.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

Your Logo



# Holiday & Christmas Tree Safety

The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, home decorating, entertaining, and an increased risk of fire due to heating equipment. Cosumnes Fire Department wants to ensure that you have a fire safe holiday season by providing you with the following safety tips.

## Holiday Safety Tips:

- Avoid using lit candles. Consider using battery-operated flame-less candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles. If you do use lit candles, [read more information about candle safety](#).
- Do not leave holiday lights on unattended. If you are leaving your home or office, turn your holiday lights off until you return.
- Do not overload electrical outlets. Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch.
- Don't block exits. Ensure trees and other holiday decorations do not block an exit way.
- Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Never put wrapping paper in the fireplace. This can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers that may result in a chimney fire.
- All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents. If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.
- Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

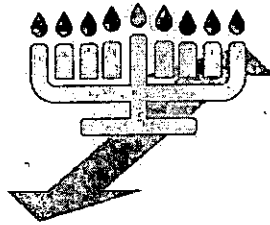
Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Holiday Fires

Did you know?

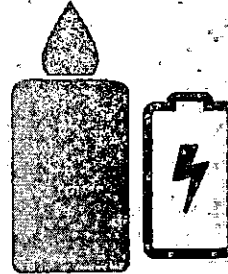


More than 1/3 of home decoration fires are started by candles.

As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.



Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that burns.



Think about using battery-operated flameless candles.



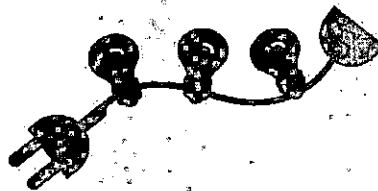
Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Holiday Fires

Did you know?



A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes 1 in every 4 winter fires..

As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.



Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect.



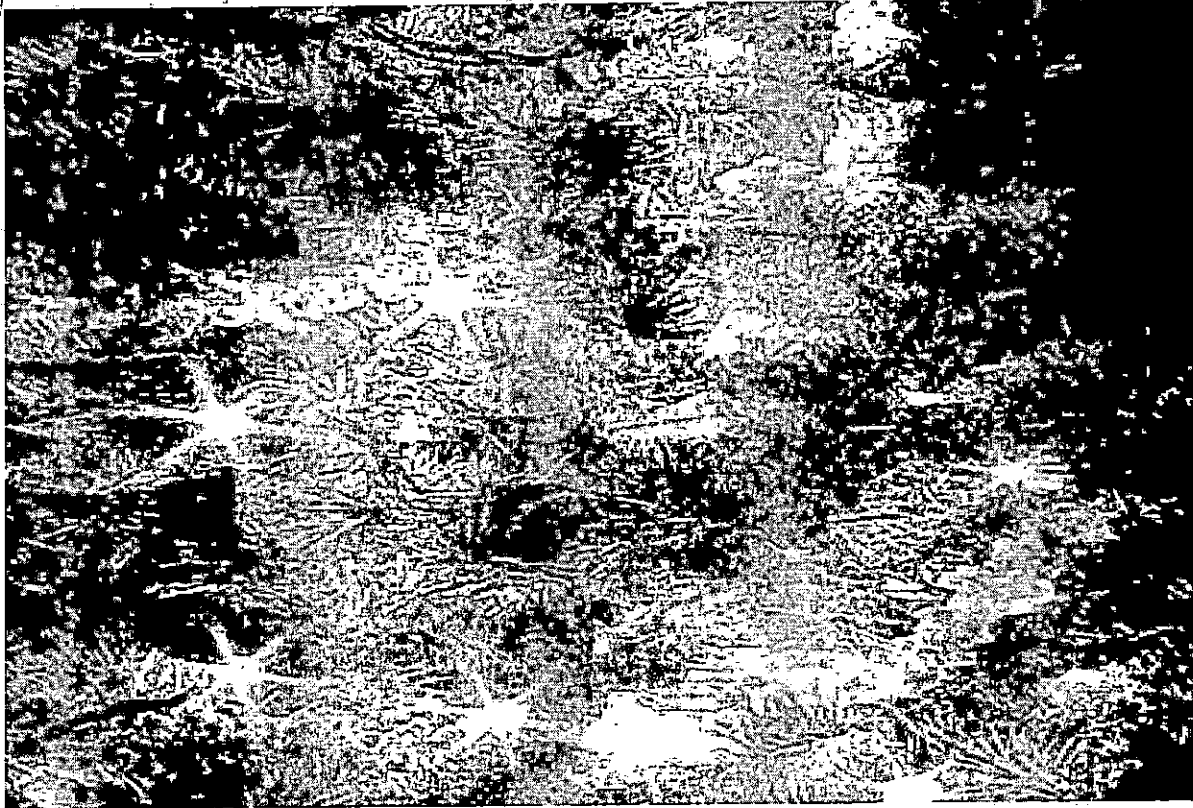
Make sure your tree is at least 3 feet away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.



## **Christmas Tree Safety Tips:**

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long and has probably dried out and is a fire hazard.
- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.
- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- When purchasing an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.
- Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

## Christmas Tree Safety



Defective lighting, including electrical cords and plugs, cause almost half of all Christmas tree fires.

Defective lighting, including electrical cords and plugs, cause almost half of all Christmas tree fires.

Both real and artificial trees pose an increased risk of fire.

Here are some tips for being smart & keeping safe when it comes to your Christmas tree:

- When choosing an artificial tree, be sure it's labeled as fire-retardant.
- When choosing a real tree, select the freshest-looking tree available.
- Select a tree that's an appropriate size for the room. Keep in mind that trees look smaller when they are outside and tree toppers and stands will add to the final height of the tree.
- Place the tree at least three feet away from heating system air registers, fireplaces and other heat sources.

- Try to position the tree near an electrical outlet to minimize the use of extension cords.
- Adequately support the tree with a sturdy stand designed not to tip over.
- Do not use electric lights on metallic trees. Use remote spot or reflective lights.
- Do not use lighted candles or other flaming devices on or near your tree.
- Whenever possible, use decorations made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.
- Unplug tree lights when out of the room and before going to sleep.
- Discard the tree immediately after the holiday.

#### When dealing with REAL trees:

- Test for freshness by grasping a branch between your thumb and forefinger and pulling it toward you. Very few needles should come off.
- Shake or bounce the tree on its stump. If an excessive number of green needles fall to the ground, the tree may not be fresh.
- If you don't plan on putting the tree up right away, make a one half inch fresh cut off the bottom of the trunk and place the tree in a five-gallon bucket of warm water. Store the tree in cool temperatures but above freezing.
- If the tree has been stored for more than three days, prior to putting it up, make another one inch cut off the bottom of the trunk and immediately place the tree into a stand that holds at least a half-gallon of water.
- Keep the water level above the cut and check the water level daily. Initially, a fresh tree may soak up to a gallon of water a day.
- No water additives are necessary. Plain tap water is best.

## Cold Weather Safety Tips

***When you are outside, frostbite and hypothermia are possible so you need to protect yourself.***

1. Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing.
2. Wear a hat. Try to stay dry and out of the wind.
3. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extreme cold.
4. Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves.

### ***Ice Safety***

Please visit this informative link <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/ice/thickness.html>

### ***To keep pipes from freezing on an outside wall:***

1. Let hot and cold water trickle or drip at night from a faucet.
2. Open cabinet doors to allow more heat to get to un-insulated pipes under a sink or near an outer wall.
3. Make sure heat is left on and set no lower than 55 degrees.
4. If you plan to be away: (1) Have someone check your house daily to make sure the heat is still on to prevent freezing, or (2) drain and shut off the water system (except indoor sprinkler systems).

### ***If Pipes Freeze:***

1. Make sure you and your family knows how to shut off the water, in case pipes burst.
2. **NEVER** try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch. Use a hair dryer instead.
3. Always be careful of the potential for electric shock in and around standing water.

***Carbon monoxide poisoning is a silent, deadly killer claiming about 1,000 lives each year in the United States.***

1. Install a carbon monoxide detector.
2. **NEVER** run generators indoors.
3. Open a window slightly when using a kerosene heater and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
4. **NEVER** use a gas oven to heat your home.
5. If your heat goes out, you can keep warm indoors by closing off rooms you do not need, dressing in layers of lightweight clothing, and wearing a cap.

### ***Wood-burning stoves, fireplaces and heaters:***

1. Always keep a screen around an open flame.
2. **NEVER** use gasoline to start your fireplace.
3. **NEVER** burn charcoal indoors.

4. Do not close the damper when ashes are hot.
5. Use only safe sources of alternative heat such as a fireplace, small well-vented wood or coal stove or portable space heaters. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.

***Animal and Pet Safety:***

1. Bring pets inside
2. Provide shelter and fresh water
3. Keep salt away from paws

***Vehicle Preparation:***

1. Check you battery
2. Check your fluids (coolant, wiper fluid, oil, etc)
3. Check your tires
4. Have jumper cables
5. Pack a blanket

*For More information please see:*

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/cold-wind-chill-chart>

<http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm.html>

# Cold Weather Safety

Cosumnes Fire Department officials want everyone to be prepared for cold weather temperatures. Residents are encouraged to initiate their own preparedness measures in anticipation of freezing temperatures and the possibility of power outages in some areas.

## Winter Storms Can Be Deadly

- Extreme cold can cause hypothermia (an extreme lowering of the body's temperature) and death.
- Fireplaces, emergency heaters, and candles can cause household fires.
- Toxic fumes such as carbon monoxide, a colorless and odorless gas, emitted from some devices can cause asphyxiation (unconsciousness or death from a lack of oxygen).

## Cold Weather Tips

- Close off unused rooms during the coldest periods.
- Caulk and weather strip doors and windows. Insulate outdoor pipes.
- Make sure your home has working fire extinguisher, carbon monoxide detector, and smoke alarm.
- Stock up and develop an Emergency Supplies Kit.
- Space heaters should be at least 3 feet from any combustible elements such as furniture and drapes. Never leave children unattended around a space heater. Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
- Never use an electric generator indoors, inside the garage, or near the air intake of your home due to the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Never use charcoal grills or portable gas camp stoves indoors – the fumes are deadly.
- Use flashlights or lanterns as opposed to candles for lighting.

## Keep Older Adults and Kids Safe

- Avoid strenuous activity, it strains the heart.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Dress warmly. Wear loose-fitting, layered clothes. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.



- Drink warm liquids and water to avoid dehydration.
- Wear mittens or gloves to protect hands – mittens are warmer.
- Watch for signs of frostbite.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia.

If you think you have frostbite or hypothermia, you should call 911 as they are potentially life threatening medical conditions. Don't eat or drink anything containing caffeine or alcohol – they worsen the symptoms.

## **Protect Your Pets**

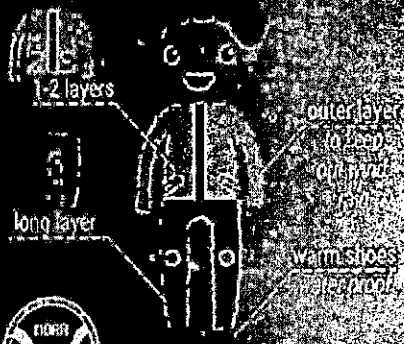
The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ([ASPCA](#)) urges area residents to protect pets during cold weather.

- An outdoor dog must be protected by a dry, draft-free doghouse that is large enough to allow the animal to sit and lie down comfortably but small enough to hold in its body heat. The house should include a warm bed, face away from the wind and have a doorway covered with a flap.
- The warm engine compartment of a parked car makes a cozy sleeping spot for cats. Before starting your engine, bang on your car to roust any sleeping animals.
- Never leave a dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. Your car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. Your animal companion could freeze to death.
- Ethylene glycol in antifreeze is a killer. Pets are attracted to the smell and taste of antifreeze, but even a small amount can kill them. Clean up spills immediately, tightly close containers and store antifreeze where pets cannot reach it.
- Keep animals inside, especially at night. Short-haired, very young, or old pets should never be left outside. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only long enough to relieve himself.

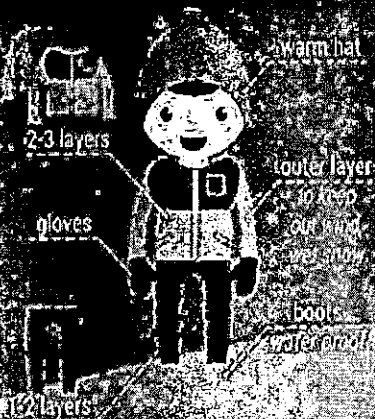
# DRESSING FOR COLD WEATHER

adding layers will help keep you warm as the temperature drops

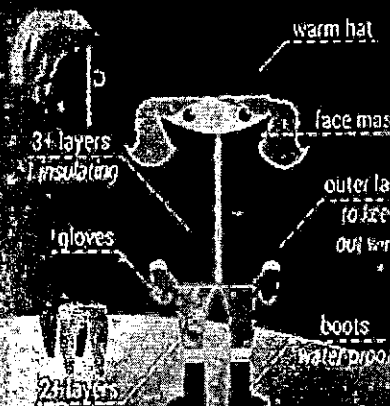
## CHILLY



## COLD



## EXTREME COLD



[weather.gov/safety](http://weather.gov/safety)

# Warning Signs of Hypothermia



Confusion



Shivering



Difficulty Speaking



Sleepiness

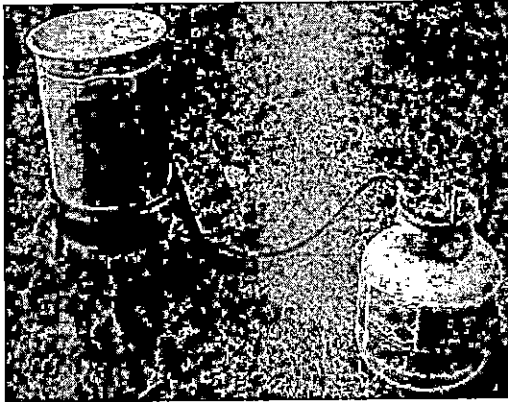


Stiff Muscles

[weather.gov/cold](http://weather.gov/cold)



# Dangers of Frying a Turkey



## Turkey Deep Fat Fryer

The Cosumnes Fire Department warns that cooking with deep fat turkey fryers can be very dangerous as they have a high risk of tipping over, overheating, spilling hot oil, and could lead to fires, burns, or other injuries.

**If a turkey fryer fire occurs, call 911 immediately.**

## Dangers of Frying a Turkey

- A small amount of cooking oil coming into contact with the burner can cause a large fire.
- An overfilled cooking pot or partially frozen turkey will cause cooking oil to spill when the turkey is inserted.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles can get dangerously hot, creating severe burn hazards.
- Units can easily tip over, spilling hot cooking oil over a large area.
- Without thermostat controls, deep fryers have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.

### Turkey Frying Safety Tips

The Cosumnes Fire Department advises against using a turkey fryer. If you decide to do it anyway, these precautions should be followed.

- Do not overfill the fryer.
- Fryers should always be used outdoors, on a solid level surface a safe distance from buildings and flammable materials.

- Keep all-purpose fire extinguishers nearby.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed before it is placed in a fryer.
- Never leave the fryer unattended because, without thermostat controls, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use or after use as the oil can remain hot for hours.
- Never use a fryer on a wooden deck, under a patio cover, in a garage or enclosed space.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts and wear long sleeves and safety goggles to protect from splatter.

## Learn About Fires

- **Fire is FAST!** In less than 30 seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill a house or for it to be engulfed in flames.
- **Fire is HOT!** Heat is more threatening than flames. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100 degrees at floor level and rise to 600 degrees at eye level. Inhaling this super-hot air will scorch your lungs and melt clothes to your skin.
- **Fire is DARK!** Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness.
- **Fire is DEADLY!** Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do. Fire produces poisonous gases that make you disoriented and drowsy.

## Smoke Alarms

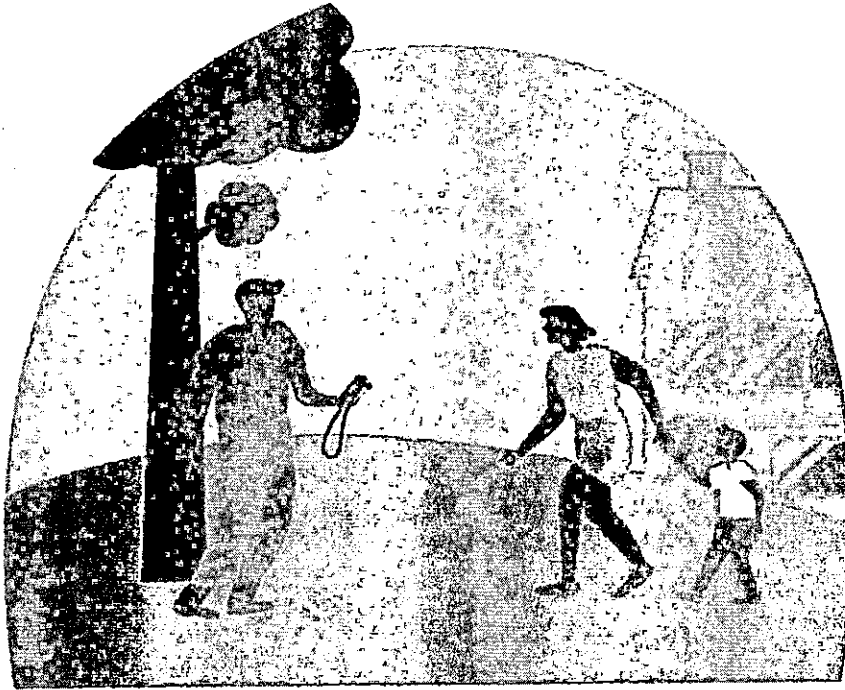
A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

- Replace batteries twice a year, unless you are using 10-year lithium batteries.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement.
- Replace the entire smoke alarm unit every 10 years or according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Never disable a smoke alarm while cooking – it can be a deadly mistake.
- Audible alarms are available for visually impaired people and smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for the hearing impaired.

## Before a Fire

If you are insured, contact your insurance company for detailed instructions on protecting your property, conducting inventory and contacting fire damage restoration companies.

## Create and Practice a Fire Escape Plan



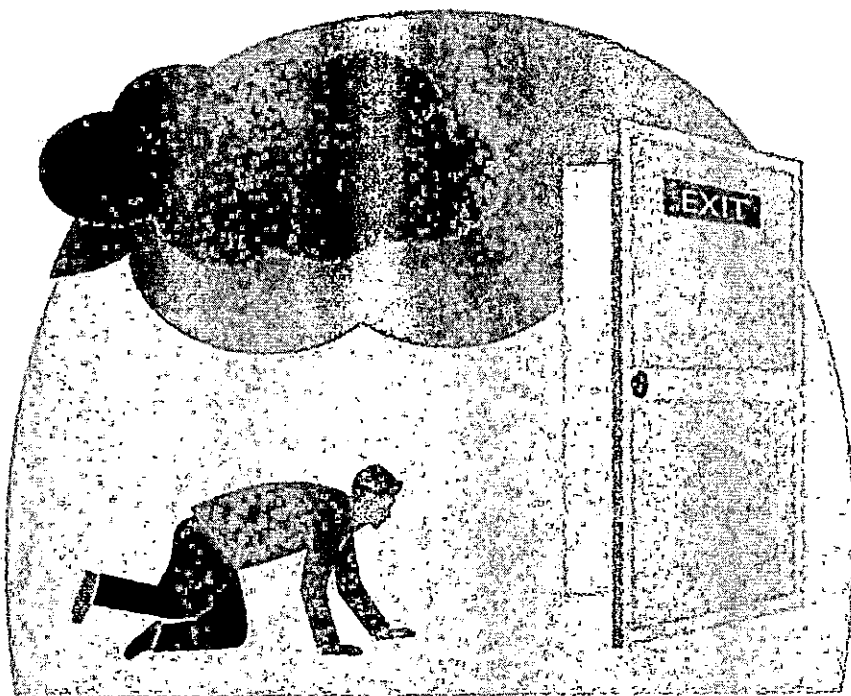
Remember that every second counts in the event of a fire. Escape plans help you get out of your home quickly. Practice your home fire escape plan twice each year. Some tips to consider when preparing this plan include:

- Find two ways to get out of each room in the event the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke.
- Make sure that windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly and that security bars can be properly opened.
- Practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark or with your eyes closed.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters.
- If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to be sure you can get through the doorways.

### **Fire Safety Tips**

- Make digital copies of valuable documents and records like birth certificates.
- Sleep with your bedroom door closed.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen. Contact your local fire department for assistance on proper use and maintenance.
- Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your residence.

## During a Fire



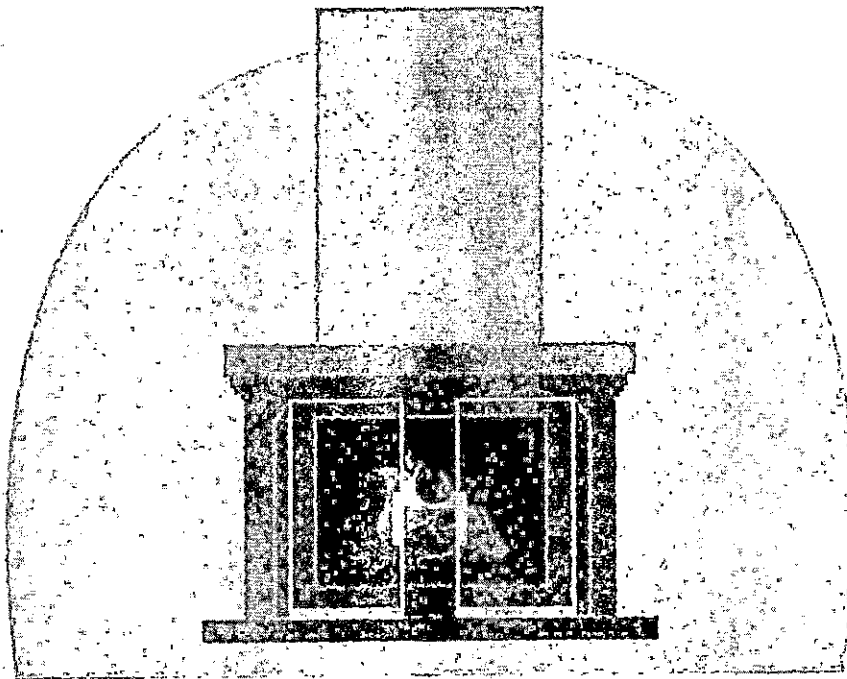
- Drop down to the floor and crawl low, under any smoke to your exit. Heavy smoke and poisonous gases collect first along the ceiling.
- Before opening a door, feel the doorknob and door. If either is hot, or if there is smoke coming around the door, leave the door closed and use your second way out.
- If you open a door, open it slowly. Be ready to shut it quickly if heavy smoke or fire is present.
- If you can't get to someone needing assistance, leave the home and call 9-1-1 or the fire department. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located.
- If pets are trapped inside your home, tell firefighters right away.
- If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Call 9-1-1 or your fire department. Say where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight.
- If your clothes catch fire, **stop, drop and roll** – stop immediately, drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out. If you or someone else cannot stop, drop and roll, smother the flames with a blanket or towel. Use cool water to treat the burn immediately for

three to five minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Get medical help right away by calling 9-1-1 or the fire department.

## After a Fire

- Contact your local disaster relief service, such as The Red Cross, if you need temporary housing, food and medicines.
- Check with the fire department to make sure your residence is safe to enter.
- DO NOT attempt to reconnect utilities yourself. The fire department should make sure that utilities are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site.
- Conduct an inventory of damaged property and items. Do not throw away any damaged goods until after you make the inventory of your items.
- Begin saving receipts for any money you spend related to fire loss. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company and for verifying losses claimed on your income tax.
- Notify your mortgage company of the fire.

## Prevent Home Fires



Home fires can be preventable. The following are simple steps that each of us can take to prevent a tragedy.



## **Cooking**

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling or broiling food. Turn off the stove if you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time.
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking.
- Position barbecue grills at least 10 feet away from siding and deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep a fire extinguisher available.

## **Electrical and Appliance Safety**

- Frayed wires can cause fires. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately and do not run cords under rugs or furniture.
- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Immediately shut off, then professionally replace, light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that flicker.

## **Holiday Safety**

- Turn off holiday lights at night or when you leave the house.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from flammable materials or consider using flameless candles.
- Water your Christmas tree daily and don't let it dry out. A dry tree is more flammable.
- Make sure your tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and not blocking an exit.
- Don't overload extension cords and outlets.

## **Fireplaces and Woodstoves**

- Inspect and clean woodstove pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.
- Use a fireplace screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks.

- Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed.

### **Portable Space Heaters**

- Keep combustible objects at least three feet away from portable heating devices.
- Only buy heaters evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Check to make sure the portable heater has a thermostat control mechanism and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over.
- Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene in kerosene heaters. Never overfill it. Use the heater in a well-ventilated room away from curtains and other flammable items.

### **Keeping Children Safe**

- Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching children that fire is a tool, not a toy.
- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children unattended near operating stoves or burning candles, even for a short time.

### **More Fire Prevention Tips**

- Never use a stove range or oven to heat your home.
- Keep combustible and flammable liquids away from heat sources.
- Portable generators should **NEVER** be used indoors and should only be refueled outdoors and in well ventilated areas.