

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Have yourself a house fire free Christmas

Monday, 17 December 2012

The festive season has arrived, and with it, an increased risk of house fire.

The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) warns that candles, power boards overloaded with Christmas lights, malfunctioning air cooling equipment, greasy ovens and barbecues are key house fire risks over Christmas and the New Year.

MFS Commander of Community Safety and Resilience, Allan Foster, said by following some simple home fire safety tips, people can enjoy a joyous and safe festive season.

“Christmas is a time when families and friends should be celebrating, not dealing with the destruction and loss of a house fire,” Commander Foster said.

Many families use candles to create a festive atmosphere. The MFS recommends using battery-operated artificial candles as a safer alternative to light up Christmas.

“If you choose to light candles, keep the immediate area around a candle clear of combustible items, including decorations and curtains. Never leave children or pets unattended with candles, and always ensure lighters and matches are kept up high, out of the reach of children,” Commander Foster said.

MFS Fire Cause Investigators also warn of an increased chance of house fire due to power boards being overloaded with Christmas lights and electrical equipment.

“Power boards must not be overloaded. Always ensure that transformers and power boards have adequate ventilation to avoid heat build-up,” Commander Foster said.

The MFS urges householders to prepare for Christmas Day by cleaning any fat build up from under the barbie or in the stove, to prevent a cooking fire.

Follow these home fire safety tips to reduce the risk of fires caused by candles this Christmas:

- Use candles only with constant adult supervision and do not use them in places where they can be knocked over by children or pets
- Keep the immediate area around a candle clear of all items, especially items that can catch fire, such as clothing, blinds, books, paper, tablecloths, wrapping paper and decorations
- Make sure candles are placed in sturdy, non-flammable holders that will not tip over, and place them on a secure piece of heat-resistant furniture.
- Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or going to sleep
- Keep candles and all open flames away from flammable liquids.

The MFS urges householders to combine the above safety tips with photo-electric smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old and a Home Fire Escape Plan.

For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

Further information for the public:

Call the MFS Community Education Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours.
Country callers 1300 737 637.

www.mfs.sa.gov.au