Christmas is in the air, and people are busy decorating and preparing for the holidays. Here are some basic safety tips to keep in mind:

**Fresh tree**
- Cut 1-2 inches off the trunk to help absorb water
- The tree stand should hold a minimum of one gallon of water and should be checked daily
- Keep the tree away from heat sources (radiator, fireplaces, heaters)
- Use cool burning lights on the tree
- Check the cord and lights. Do not use if damaged.
- **Never** leave the lights on when you are sleeping or gone from your home
- Do not burn candles near the tree
- Do not plug more than 2-3 strands of standard size lights into one extension cord. Check the manufacturer’s recommendations
- When purchasing a tree check for freshness:
  - the trunk should be sticky on the bottom
  - pull on the needles, they should not come out of the branch easily
  - bounce the tree on the ground, you should not see a shower of needles falling off the tree
- When the tree becomes dry dispose of it promptly and properly

**Artificial tree**
- Should have a label stating it is “fire resistant”
- **Never** put electric lights on a metallic tree (this could cause you to be electrocuted)

**Home tips**
- Make sure your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector is working
- Never use indoor extension cords outdoors
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above the ground and out of the snow
- If using your fireplace make sure the flue is open
- Never burn wrapping paper or pine boughs in the fireplace
- Keep a screen in place anytime the fireplace is being used
- Do not use a gas fireplace if the glass doors are broken.

**Tips for Children**
- Keep bubbling lights away from children
- Do not use candles around little children
- Keep matches and lighters out the reach of children
- Create an emergency plan in case a fire breaks out and **practice** it with your family.
  Everyone should know what to do in case of a fire.

Have a safe holiday season!!!