

**Haw River Fire Department asks its citizens to help “Keep the Wreath Green”**

As the holiday season approaches, the Haw River Fire Department wants to remind citizens to help do their part in preventing deadly home fires and help us “Keep the Wreath Green”.   
  
Beginning Monday, November 21st, the Haw River Fire Department will display an illuminated wreath on the front of the Haw River Town Hall. This wreath will begin the holiday season filled with green lights. For each residential fire that occurs in the Haw River Fire District through New Year’s Day, a green bulb will be replaced with a red one. Our hope is that the citizens will help us “Keep the Wreath Green” all season long.   
  
With the hectic holiday season, it is easy for families to become complacent about fire safety. With the additional use of fireplaces, decorative lighting, live Christmas trees, and the burning of candles, the risk of fire in homes increases.

To prevent these holiday fires, and to help “Keep the Wreath Green”, the Haw River Fire Department offers these holiday safety tips:

1. Choose holiday decorations carefully, using those only made of flame-resistant, flame-retardant, or non-combustible materials.
2. Keep candles away from decorations or other combustible materials and NEVER leave candles unattended.
3. Use only lights listed by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriter’s Laboratories, and pay close attention to the manufacturer’s instructions for use.
4. Closely inspect all holiday lighting before use to insure all wires, bulbs and connections are in a safe condition. Discard any lights with exposed wires, broken insulation, cracked or missing bulbs, or other defects.
5. Avoid the use of drop cords to operate holiday lights, or any other appliance.
6. Turn off all holiday lights, and extinguish all candles when leaving home.
7. When choosing a live Christmas tree, look for signs of freshness by lightly pulling branches through your closed fist. Fresh trees should retain their needles during this test. Immediately place the tree in water and keep the tree watered while in the house. Keep a close check on the dryness of the tree and remove the tree when needles easily fall off. Don’t locate Christmas trees near heat ducts, open flames, or in front of doors or windows that might be needed as a means of escape from your home.
8. When preparing holiday meals, be diligent and don’t become preoccupied by guests, or other holiday distractions. While cooking, keep combustibles, children and pets away from cooking appliances.
9. If entertaining at your home, always check on, between and under cushions, and inside trash cans for cigarette butts that might be left smoldering.
10. Ensure there is a working smoke alarm on each level of your home and practice fire escape plans with all family members and holiday guests.

Our hope is that during the 2016 holiday season we will be successful in preventing fire and avoiding tragedy in our community. Please help us have a great holiday season by practicing fire safety every day and help us “Keep the Wreath Green!”

