Christmas #2 Day for Home Fires

More home fires happen on December 25 than any other single day in Massachusetts except Thanksgiving. Fires are always terrible, but they seem worse during the festive holiday season. A wonderful family holiday can be ruined with a cooking or candle fire, a burn injury or a carbon monoxide incident from long-term use of the oven. Every home should have working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.

Don’t Let Fire Ruin Your Holiday

Cooking Leading Cause
Cooking is the leading cause of fires in the home and the holiday season is no exception. It is important to remember two key things: Stand by Your Pan to prevent cooking fires and to Put a Lid on It if one does occur. Leaving cooking unattended, even for a minute, is the leading cause of fires. When baking, use a timer, and stay nearby.

Heating Second Leading Cause of Holiday Season Fires
Heating is the second leading cause of home fires during the holiday season. Keep warm and keep safe by having the furnace and chimney checked by professionals, and when heating with wood, dispose of the ashes in a lidded metal ashcan outside the home. A single ember can stay hot undetected for days. Use the three foot rule and keep combustibles, like holiday decorations, three feet away from heat sources.

Heating Leading Source of CO in the Home
Heating is also the leading cause of carbon monoxide poisoning in the home and sadly we lost a father and son in Acushnet on December 7, 2016. They were overcome by the invisible fumes from a leaky furnace and had no carbon monoxide alarms in the home to warn them. Both smoke and CO alarms are required in Massachusetts homes.

Burn Candles inside a 1-Foot Circle of Safety
Many of the holidays celebrated at this time of year use candles. Sadly, the increased candle use at this time of year also causes a boost in candle fires. Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve are among the December days when the most candle fires occur. Consider using battery-operated candles instead, especially if you have children or pets.

Christmas Tree Safety Tips
Although Christmas tree fires are rare these days, they are very serious when they do occur. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, one-third of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems and one-quarter start when the tree is placed too close to a heat source such as a fireplace, woodstove, radiator or space heater. Always keep your Christmas trees watered, place it well away from a heat source, and dispose of them after the holidays.