



# Balfour Beatty Communities

Balfour Beatty Communities wants to make sure your family has a safe and happy holiday season. Please refer to the information contained in this newsletter, as you make your holiday preparations.

## GUIDELINES TO A SAFE & HAPPY HOLIDAY

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- Make sure Christmas trees are well anchored and watered so they do not become a fire hazard.
- 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.
- Keep all breakable Christmas ornaments, electrical extensions, and burning objects (candles, incense and potpourri pots) out of small children's reach. If you are celebrating Hanukkah and lighting a menorah, or celebrating Kwanzaa and lighting the seven candles (mishumaa saba), be sure to keep the open flames away from children.
- Make sure your fireplace is screened and all trees, presents, and children are kept away from fire.
- When wrapping presents keep scissors out of children's hands.
- Make sure infants and toddlers don't play with ribbon.
- While shopping never let your children out of your sight.
- If your child is lost in a mall or department store, demand that the store take appropriate action.
- Teach children not to succumb to temptation of toys or candy in a shopping environment.
- Request (like a mall security guard) an escort back to your car when you are finished shopping at night.
- When involving children in holiday baking, make sure adults handle all of the hot items.
- Never leave your children unattended in a car and ensure that your child is properly restrained, either in a child safety seat, booster seat, or a seat belt is used.
- Create well-supervised activities for children during Christmas breaks.

## TOY SAFETY TIPS FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPERS

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- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills, and interest level of the intended child and do not deviate from the guidelines.
- Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide.
- For infants, toddlers, and all children who still mouth objects, avoid toys with small parts that could pose a fatal choking hazard.
- Look for sturdy construction, such as tightly secured eyes, noses, and other potential small parts.
- For all children under age 8, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points and do not purchase electric toys with heating elements.
- Check instructions for clarity. They should be clear to you, and when appropriate, to the child.
- Immediately discard plastic wrappings on toys, which can cause suffocation.

## TREES

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- Many artificial trees are fire resistant. If you buy one, look for a statement specifying this protection.
- A fresh tree will stay green longer and be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree. To check for freshness, remember:
  - A fresh tree is green.
  - Fresh needles are hard to pull from branches.
  - When bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break.
  - The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin.
  - When the trunk of a tree is bounced on the ground, a shower of falling needles shows that the tree is too dry.
- Place tree away from fireplaces, radiators, and other heat sources. Heated rooms dry trees out rapidly creating fire hazards.
- Cut off about two inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. Trim away branches as necessary to set tree trunk in the base of a sturdy, water-holding stand with wide spread feet. Keep the stand filled with water while the tree is indoors.

- Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways. Use thin guy-wires to secure a large tree to walls or ceiling.
- Do not burn trees in the fireplace. When dry, trees burn like tinder. Flames can flare out of control and send sparks flying into a room, or up the chimney to ignite creosote deposits.

## LIGHTS AND CANDLES

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- Indoor or outdoor, use only lights that have been tested for safety. Identify these by the label from an independent testing laboratory.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged sets or repair them before using.
- When hanging outdoor lights, use proper hooks. Never nail or staple lights to the house, walls, or gutters.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Turn off all lights on trees and other decorations when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short and start a fire.
- The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and any person touching a branch could be electrocuted! To avoid this danger, use colored spotlights above or beside a tree, never fastened onto it!
- Keep “bubbling” lights away from children. These lights with their bright colors and bubbling movement can tempt curious children to break candle-shaped glass, which can cut, and attempt to drink liquid, which contains hazardous chemicals.
- Keep candles away from other decorations and wrapping paper and place candles where they cannot be knocked down or blown over.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.

## TRIMMINGS

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- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials.
- Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or non-leaded metals.
- Wear gloves while decorating with spun glass “angel hair” to avoid irritation to the eyes and skin.
- In homes with small children, take special care to:
  - Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.
  - Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of reach of children.
  - Avoid trimming that resembles candy or food. A child could eat them!

## PAPER

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- When making paper decorations, look for materials labeled non-combustible or flame-resistant.
- Never place trimming near open flames or electrical connections.
- Remove all wrapping papers from tree and fireplace areas immediately after presents are opened.
- Do not burn papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

## GENERAL RULES FOR HOLIDAY SAFETY

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- Keep matches, lighters, and candles out of reach of children.
- Avoid smoking near flammable decorations
- Make an emergency plan to use if a fire breaks out anywhere in the home. Each family member should know and PRACTICE THE PLAN!
- Avoid wearing loose flowing clothes particularly long, open sleeves near open flames such as those of a fireplace, stove, or candle.
- Never burn candles near evergreens. Burning evergreens in the fireplace can also be hazardous. When dry, greens burn like tinder, flames can flare out of control, and send sparks flying into a room, or up the chimney to ignite creosote deposits.
- Plan for safety, there is no substitute for common sense. Look for and eliminate potential danger spots near candles, fireplaces, trees, and/or electrical connections.

## HOLIDAY ENERGY SAVINGS TIPS

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- Avoid additional spending this holiday season by following these energy-saving tips:
- Put holiday lights on timers so you don't accidentally leave them on overnight or during the daytime.
- Consider buying miniature lights, which use about 70% less energy and last much longer than the larger bulbs. LED holiday lights use about 90% less electricity than regular holiday lights.
- Unplug phantom energy hogs before you go on vacation. TVs, DVD players, computers, printers and many other electronics use energy even when they are not turned on.

## OUR COMMITMENT

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Balfour Beatty Communities genuinely cares about the well being of our residents and promotes safe and welcoming communities. We are vigilant about addressing your issues and have procedures in place to handle your maintenance matters in a timely and professional manner. We value your input, feedback and cooperation in maintaining the quality of our communities and your home. Please contact our Community Management office if you have any questions or we can assist in any way.