



## **Holiday Decorations Safety Policy**

Revision Date: September 9, 2013

### **1. Applicability**

This policy applies to indoor locations at all OHSU locations and campuses.

### **2. Scope and Purpose**

This policy describes what holiday decorations are allowed to ensure compliance with applicable fire and life safety codes and minimize related safety risks.

### **3. Implementation**

Implementation of the provisions within this policy is the responsibility of each employee under the direction of individual OHSU departments. Environmental Health & Radiation Safety (EHRS) is responsible for providing technical guidance.

### **4. Requirements**

OHSU policy does not allow departments to use University funds for holiday decorations.

#### **a) Decorations Placement**

- i) Decorations must not impede or obstruct doors, corridors, stairs or other means of egress.
- ii) Decorations are prohibited on 90 minute fire separation doors, including stairwell doors.
- iii) Decorations must not be placed within 18 inches from the bottom of fire sprinkler deflectors in sprinklered areas.
- iv) Decorations must not be placed within 24 inches from the ceiling in non-sprinklered areas.
- v) Decorations may not project more than 6 inches into corridors.
- vi) No more than 20% of a wall and 10% of a room door may be covered with decorations, including existing artwork.

## b) Lights

Only miniature lights (rated, UL-Listed) may be used during the holiday season. Lights with frayed cords, loose or cracked wires, sockets or connections are prohibited. Lights may be placed near the ceiling but must not impede flow from, block, or hang on sprinkler heads or sprinkler piping. Miniature lights are not permitted in the patient vicinity.

- i) All lights and electrical devices should be disconnected during non-business hours or when unattended.
- ii) Extension Cords: A single, grounded, heavy duty (14 gauge or more), UL-Listed extension cord may be used safely and properly to provide power in areas other than patient care rooms.

## c) Sources of ignition (e.g., candles, yule logs, incense) and sources of open flame are prohibited.

## d) Holiday Trees

Fresh-cut and imitation trees may be displayed between December 1 and December 27 and must comply with the requirements appropriate to the display area:

- i) All above listed placement, egress and height requirements must be met.
- ii) Trunks of fresh-cut trees must be sawed off at least one (1) inch above the original cut.
- iii) Trees must be mounted securely in a tree stand, tub, or other water-holding reservoir.
- iv) Avoid placement near heating devices including fireplaces and air vents.
- v) **Building entrance lobbies:** Fresh-cut trees kept in water may be placed in building entrance lobbies only. For all Fresh-cut trees, an individual must be designated to ensure trees are kept watered. If the tree becomes dry and the needles begin to drop, the tree must be removed immediately.
- vi) **Patient rooms:** Imitation trees up to 24 inches high are allowed.
- vii) **Other areas:** Imitation trees up to 7 ½ feet in height are allowed as long as tree and decorations are not closer than 18 inches from the ceiling.

## 5. Definitions

- “Holiday Season”: Halloween through New Year’s Day
- “Patient Vicinity”: Within 6 feet of the patient bed
- “Decorations”: Decorations are materials applied over interior finishes such as curtains, drapes, fabrics, streamer and other surface coverings, batting, cloth,

cotton, hay, stalks, straw, vines, leaves, trees, moss and similar items including foam plastics.

## **6. Resources**

Questions or requests for exceptions may be routed to Environmental Health and Radiation Safety at 503-494-7795.

### **Reference:**

Fire and Life Safety Codes (NFPA and Joint Commission)  
Holiday Décor and Fire Safety Guidelines (Oregon State Fire Marshal; Healthcare Unit)  
- July 20, 2011

### **Related policies, procedures and forms:**

Employee Recognition, Contests and Celebrations Policy: <https://o2.ohsu.edu/policies-and-compliance/ohsu-policy-manual/chapter-3-human-resources/ohsu-policy-03-25-090.cfm>

### **Responsible Office:**

[Environmental Health & Radiation Safety](#) (503-494-7795)