

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

SUBJECT: HOLIDAY DECORATIONS AND SIGNAGE

Procedure No: LS-08-007

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

In accordance with the Life Safety Code (NFPA 101), NFPA 701 and 289, all decorative materials shall be fire-retardant and only displayed in approved locations and quantities.

PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE

To ensure the protection of patients, staff, students and visitors from the risk presented by the use of unsafe, potentially combustible materials as holiday decorations.

PROCEDURE

Decorations and combustible materials should not be presented in any manner that would constitute a fire hazard. Paper signs should be posted on a board meant for University communications or in an appropriate frame; the preferred method for communications is to utilize communications boards. The use of paper products and combustible materials as decorations is at the discretion of the Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety.

General Requirements for Decorations

Live materials such as trees, pine branches, palm, cane reeds, hay, stalks, straw, vines, leaves, trees, moss, pinecones, or other dry organic materials such as edible decorations (popcorn, cookies, and candy) are prohibited. Dry combustible materials, such as cotton, gauze, or artificial snow blankets are prohibited. Metallic and Aluminum trees are not permitted. Decorative materials include, but are not limited to, artificial trees, wreaths, and materials applied over interior finishes such as curtains, drapes, fabrics, streamers, batting, cloth and cotton. Covering room doors with wrapping paper is not permitted.

Decorative materials shall not be displayed in a way that impedes or obstructs corridors, stairs, doors or other means of egress. Decorative materials shall not be displayed in a way that obstructs the view of exit signage. Decorative materials are prohibited from being affixed to fire doors, smoke separation doors, stairwell doors, sprinkler heads, smoke detectors, exit signs, pull stations, light fixtures, strobes or overhead speakers. Decorative materials on non-fire-rated doors must not interfere with the operation or any required latching of the door. Decorative materials are prohibited from being affixed to sprinkler lines or any other fixed utility, and from being displayed in a manner that would raise or disturb ceiling tiles. Decorative materials that may damage paint or walls are prohibited. Decorative materials shall not be positioned in a way that obstructs the visibility of, or access to the fire protection system. Decorative materials shall not be positioned in a way that does not allow for at least 18 inches of clearance from any sprinkler head. Free-standing decorative materials shall not be placed in a manner that would block paths of egress. Free-standing decorative materials shall be well-secured to prevent materials from falling or toppling. All decorations must comply with S-08-015 Proper Storage Procedures and S-08-043 Campus Hallways.

Decorative Materials in Healthcare Occupancies

Under this Holiday Decorations Procedure, the term Healthcare Occupancies also includes clinical operations conducted in business occupancies. Decorative materials are prohibited in all patient care areas of clinical operations, to include decorative electric lights and other electric-powered decorations. No more than 20 (twenty) percent of a wall and 20 (twenty) percent of a non-fire rated door may be covered with decorations, to include existing artwork (such as photographs, paintings and other art) and communications boards. Only flame-retardant decorative materials are permitted in non-patient care areas (i.e. lobby). The flame-retardant rating must either be displayed directly on the decorative material, or the packages must be kept to verify the fire-retardant rating of the decorative material. Application of fire retardant sprays (or coatings) is not acceptable. Decorations that can pose one of the following hazards shall not be used: choking, lacerations, injuries from sharp objects, wall-mounted displays extending greater than one (1) inch from the wall. In clinical operations area, all decorations must comply with infection control practices.

Decorative Materials in Residence Halls

In accordance with NFPA 101, draperies, curtains and other loosely hanging furnishings, and decorations must be flame resistant. Furnishings and decorations of explosive or flammable character are prohibited. Electrical decorations are permitted under the guidance below.

Decorative Materials in Laboratories

Combustible decorations are prohibited in laboratories. Decorative electric lights and other electric-powered decorations are not permitted in laboratories, to include pre-lighted artificial trees.

Decorative Materials in Other Campus Buildings

Locations not previously identified as Healthcare Occupancy, Clinical Operations, Residence Hall or Laboratory are classified as Other Campus Buildings. These locations should comply with the General Requirements for Decorations, as well as the guidance regarding electrical decorations and lighting, and open flames. The use of combustible materials as decorations is at the discretion of the Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety.

Electrical Decorations and Lighting

Decorative electric lights and other electric-powered decorations must have an Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) authorization; electrical decorations with frayed cords, loose or cracked wires, sockets or connections are prohibited. When permitted all decorative lights and electrical decorations must be disconnected during non-business hours or when unattended. Battery powered decorations may be considered, but approval must be obtained from the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department. Pre-lighted artificial trees are permitted to be displayed in lobby areas of all campus buildings if they meet all of the requirements of decorative material listed in this procedure. Regardless of location, the use of extension cords is not permitted (see S-08-043 Extension Cords). Decorative electric lights and other electric-powered decorations are not permitted in patient care areas and research laboratories, to include pre-lighted artificial trees.

Open Flames

Sources of ignition and sources of open flame (i.e. candles, sterno, etc.) are prohibited in all campus buildings. An approved exception is the use of sterno during catered events in non-clinical and non-patient care buildings when the cater event is continuously supervised and a fire extinguisher must be located within close proximity. Catering tables must be set up so that they do not block paths of egress. Sources of ignition and sources of open flame are permitted during construction, renovation, maintenance activities with appropriate hot work permit (See S-08-049 Performing Hot Work) and laboratory settings, when used in accordance with University procedures. (Also see LS-08-001 Code Red Procedure)

Compliance

Decorations not meeting this procedure shall be directed to be removed and returned to the owner. If the owner is not present, the decoration shall be stored until the owner can pick them up within seven (7) days of removal. Decorations not recovered within seven (7) days will be discarded.

Decorative materials must be removed and properly stored or disposed of within seven (7) days following the holiday.

Any exception to this procedure must be approved by the Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety. For questions please contact the Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Department at 419-530-3600.

Source: Safety & Health Committee

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