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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Safety Precautions for the Busy Holiday Season!

During the holiday season, families are warming their homes for comfort and applying their finishing touches to their holiday decorations. Don't let the busyness of the season take away from important safety precautions that should be taken each winter. Increased amounts of cooking, decorating, and harsh winter weather all contribute to an increased risk of hazards which is often overlooked during this time of year.

Lake Stevens Fire offers the following safety tips to help keep you and your family safe throughout the season:

- Keep a 3-foot "safe zone" around all heaters and fireplaces.
- Have your heating system tuned up each year.
- Choose holiday decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Don't try to thaw pipes or spigots with heat guns or blow torches. Heat can build up inside the walls and start a fire.
- Use caution when driving in cold temperatures or adverse weather conditions.
- Keep a winter emergency kit in your car that includes a blanket, gloves, shovel, etc. See <http://www.wsdot.com/winter/emergencykit.htm> for a detailed list.
- Use decorative lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Keep lit candles away from anything that can burn and make sure they are in sturdy, fireproof holders. Blow out candles when you leave a room. Consider flameless candles.
- Make sure Christmas trees, real or artificial, are at least three feet from heat sources.
- Add water to real Christmas trees daily. Dispose of trees after Christmas or when dry. Dried out trees are fire dangers and should not be left in or near your house.
- Never use the stove, oven or BBQ as a source of heat. BBQs should never be used inside the home as it will cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home according to manufacturer's instructions and know the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Make sure you have working smoke alarms in your home and test them monthly.
- Practice your fire escape plan.

Lake Stevens Fire wishes you a safe and enjoyable holiday season. For additional winter safety tips, visit our website at www.lsfire.org.

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"Touching Lives Today ~ Planning for Tomorrow"

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