



TOOL BOX TALK: Fire Safety

As the holiday season approaches, quite often facilities see an increase in temporary decorations and lighting. While these decorations can lift our spirits, they can also elevate the potential for serious fire hazards. The National Fire Protection Association or NFPA has published standards for fire protection and emergency egress in public, private and educational facilities. Of particular concern is the ability to utilize our buildings to the fullest while maintaining a safe and positive work environment.

Many fire hazards can be found on a daily basis in our buildings. It is our job as “custodians” of the facility to help ensure buildings remain safe for occupants. Routine safety compliance inspections can easily identify some common and potentially dangerous fire code violations.

Here are just a few common violations:

- Permanent use of extension cords to power lighting or decorations
- Decorations hung from acoustical drop ceilings
- Wall decorations covering more than 20% of a combustible wall surface
- Items stored beneath stairwells or combustibles in mechanical rooms
- Power strips plugged into power strips
- Ground plugs missing from electrical cords
- Overloading electrical circuits with multiple items
- Items stored on shelves within 2 feet of the drop ceiling or a sprinkler head
- General housekeeping deficiencies limiting access to fire extinguishers .
- Blocked exit pathways or blocked exit signage
- Blocked emergency egress routes (storage in exit halls, stairwells)
- Failure to conduct monthly fire evacuation drills
- Failure to inspect fire extinguishers on a monthly basis
- Blocked open fire doors in hallways, stairwells or mechanical rooms
- Failure to monitor automatic fire door closure systems during fire drills

Take the time to identify and correct these hazards **BEFORE** a fire emergency occurs. Have a happy, safe holiday season.



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