



## Holiday Decorations in Health Care Occupancies

Combustible decorations are prohibited in health care occupancies unless one of the following are met:

1. Decorations are flame-retardant treated with a listed product (UL)
2. The decorations meet the requirements of NFPA 701 (test for fire spread)
3. Decorations meet NFPA 289 (fire test)
4. Decorations are not required to be flame retardant (1-3 above) when decorations such as photographs, paintings and other art are attached directly to walls, ceilings and non-fire-rated doors and:
  - a. Decorations do not interfere with door operation and latching
  - b. Decorations do not exceed 30% of wall, ceiling and door that it is attached to. (30% of wall, 30% of ceiling, 30% of door)
  - c. Decorations do not exceed 50% inside of resident sleeping room wall, ceiling and door that it is attached to. (50% of wall, 50% of ceiling, 50% of door)
5. Decorations such as photographs, paintings are in limited quantities that are not considered a fire hazard

The key is to use art that is attached directly to the wall, ceiling or door. It should be fairly flat and not consist of high surface area materials.

“Live” Christmas trees, wreaths, and other similar cuttings from live plants are not permitted.

Artificial Christmas trees, wreaths and other similar items are permitted when they are labeled as flame-retardant.

Decorations that hang from the ceiling or reduce the corridor width are not permitted.

Holiday lights must be UL listed. Lighting and temporary wiring (extension cords) can only be used for 90 days. Documentation of start date of lighting must be provided. (NFPA 70, 590.3)

## Code Citations

From NFPA 101:

**19.7.5.6** Combustible decorations shall be prohibited in any health care occupancy, unless one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) They are flame-retardant or are treated with approved fire-retardant coating that is listed and labeled for application to the material to which it is applied.
- (2) The decorations meet the requirements of NFPA 701, *Standard Methods of Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films*.
- (3) The decorations exhibit a heat release rate not exceeding 100 kW when tested in accordance with NFPA 289, *Standard Method of Fire Test for Individual Fuel Packages*, using the 20 kW ignition source.
- (4)\*The decorations, such as photographs, paintings, and other art, are attached directly to the walls, ceiling, and non-fire-rated doors in accordance with the following:
  - (a) Decorations on non-fire-rated doors do not interfere with the operation or any required latching of the door and do not exceed the area limitations of 19.7.5.6(b), (c), or (d).
  - (b) Decorations do not exceed 20 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside any room or space of a smoke compartment that is not protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.
  - (c) Decorations do not exceed 30 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside any room or space of a smoke compartment that is protected throughout by an approved supervised automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.
  - (d) Decorations do not exceed 50 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside patient sleeping rooms, having a capacity not exceeding four persons, in a smoke compartment that is protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.
- (5)\*They are decorations, such as photographs and paintings, in such limited quantities that a hazard of fire development or spread is not present.

From NFPA 70:

## ARTICLE 590

### Temporary Installations

**590.3 (B) 90 Days.** Temporary electric power and lighting installations shall be permitted for a period not to exceed 90 days for holiday decorative lighting and similar purposes.

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