

State Fire Marshal Division

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Christmas Trees Information Sheet

The following items are a reprint of the requirements relating to Christmas trees found in the 2007 Minnesota State Fire Code (MSFC) Section 806.

806.1 Natural cut trees. Natural cut trees, where allowed by this section, shall have the trunk bottoms cut off at least 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) above the original cut and shall be placed in a support device complying with Section 806.1.2.

806.1.1 Restricted occupancies. Natural cut trees shall be prohibited in Group A, E, I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, M, R-1, R-2 and R-4 occupancies.

Exceptions:

1. Trees located in areas protected by an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2 shall not be prohibited in Groups A, E, M, R-1 and R-2.
2. Trees shall be allowed within dwelling units in Group R-2 occupancies.

For more specific information on occupancy classifications please refer to the occupancy classification section on page 2 of this document.

806.1.2 Support devices. The support device that holds the tree in an upright position shall be of a type that is stable and that meets all of the following criteria:

1. The device shall hold the tree securely and be of adequate size to avoid tipping over of the tree.
2. The device shall be capable of containing a minimum two-day supply of water.
3. The water level, when full, shall cover the tree stem at least 2 inches (51 mm). The water level shall be maintained above the fresh cut and checked at least once daily.

806.1.3 Dryness. The tree shall be removed from the building whenever the needles or leaves fall off readily when a tree branch is shaken or if the needles are brittle and break when bent between the thumb and index finger. The tree shall be checked daily for dryness.

806.2 Artificial vegetation. Artificial decorative vegetation shall meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701. Meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 shall be documented and certified by the manufacturer in an approved manner.

806.3 Obstruction of means of egress. The required width of any portion of a means of egress shall not be obstructed by decorative vegetation.

806.4 Open flame. Candles and open flames shall not be used on or near decorative vegetation. Natural cut trees shall be kept a distance from heat vents and any open flame or heat-producing devices at least equal to the height of the tree.

806.5 Electrical fixtures and wiring. The use of unlisted electrical wiring and lighting on natural cut trees and artificial decorative vegetation shall be prohibited. The use of electrical wiring and lighting on artificial trees constructed entirely of metal shall be prohibited.

More information is available from the Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division by sending an e-mail to firecode@state.mn.us or visit our web page at www.fire.state.mn.us for the latest information on fire in Minnesota.

OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATIONS

MN State Fire Code – 2007

Group A – Assembly (more than 50 persons):

- A-1 - Theaters (performing arts, fixed seats)
- A-2 - Dining and drinking (food/drink)
- A-3 - Auditoriums, churches, synagogues, gymnasiums, museums (worship, recreation, amusement, other)
- A-4 - Arenas, swimming pools, tennis courts (indoor spectator seating)
- A-5 - Stadiums, grandstands (outdoor seating)

Group E – Educational (through 12th grade):

- Pre-school
- K-12
- Adult Day Care (occupants capable of escape)
- Day Care – older children (see I-4 for younger)

Group I – Institutional:

- Group I-1 (more than 16 persons):
 - Supervised residential (group homes, congregate care, half-way houses, treatment centers, board & care, Supervised living facilities – Class A-2*)
- Group I-2:
 - Hospitals
 - Nursing homes
 - Detox centers
 - Supervised living facilities – Class B-3*
- Group I-3: jails, prisons
- Group I-4: day-care facilities (adult or child) for 6 or more persons not capable of self preservation*

Group M – Mercantile:

- Stores
- Retail/wholesale stores
- Sales rooms
- Motor vehicle fuel dispensing (no repairs)

Group R – Residential:

- Group R-1 (transient in nature < 30 days):
 - Hotels / Motels
 - Boarding houses
 - Bed & breakfast with 6 or more guest rooms*
- Group R-2:
 - Apartments (includes assisted living facilities without personal care)
 - Dormitories
 - Boarding houses or hotels (not transient)
 - Fraternities and sororities
 - Convents / Monasteries
- Group R-3:
 - One & two family homes
 - Bed & breakfast with 5 or fewer rooms*
 - Day care (family & group family) for 5 or fewer*
 - Supervised living facilities (A-1 & B-1)*
- Group R-4: residential care and assisted living (for 6-16 people):
 - Supervised living facilities (A-2 and B-2)*