To: Building Coordinators

From: Todd Houts, Director

Date: November 19, 2020

Subject: Fresh Cut Trees/Foliage and Seasonal Decorations in University Buildings, Residence Halls, and Family Student Housing

(Note: These procedures do not apply to the University of Missouri Healthcare System.)

Under normal operations, MU would allow the use of fresh cut trees/foliage treated with a fire-retardant spray and other seasonal decorations in university facilities. However, due to the uncertain occupancy of MU’s buildings over the next two months, fresh cut natural trees and evergreen decorations are NOT authorized for 2020 in any university-owned or leased facility. Fresh cut greenery has the potential to dry out and become a fire hazard and eliminating them for 2020 erases the responsibility needed to maintain or discard them, as needed.

Other seasonal decorations are not authorized this year in open communal spaces in Residential Life facilities including Residence Halls and Family Student Housing. In Residential Life office spaces, other seasonal decorations require prior approval by the building coordinator.

Seasonal decorations (excluding fresh cut trees/foliage) may be put up in other campus buildings no earlier than November 25, 2020 and must be removed from the site on or before January 7, 2021. Seasonal lights should be inspected for loose connections, broken or cracked sockets, or frayed or bare wires.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please call Jamila Peña Crespo or Shawn McGruder at Environmental Health & Safety at 573-882-7018.

Please distribute this letter and attachment to the appropriate persons in your department/building.

Attachment

cc: Gary Ward
    Tim Hickman
    Pete Millier
    Tyler Page
    Benjamin Knapp
SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF FRESH CUT TREES/FOLIAGE AND SEASONAL DECORATIONS IN UNIVERSITY FACILITIES
(Does not apply to University of Missouri Healthcare System)

Fresh Cut and Live Trees/Foliage

Not authorized for 2020.

Other Seasonal Decorations

1. Large seasonal decorations must not be placed near a stairway, radiator, exit, hallway, or any other location where the tree/decoration, if standing or fallen, would block an escape route, signage or increase fire risk.

2. Check to see that artificial trees are Underwriters’ Laboratories (U.L.) listed and labeled “Fire Resistant”.

3. Only use lighting that is listed by U.L. or another independent testing laboratory. Before putting lights on trees or other decorations, inspect for frayed cords, loose connections, broken sockets, exposed wires and general safety. Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines for the maximum number of lights on any one circuit. Do not use real candles or other open flames as a part of any seasonal decoration.

4. Turn off and unplug all decorative lights when there is no one to monitor them.

5. Electrical tree lights are not to be used on metallic trees due to the ever present danger of electrocution.

6. Avoid use of electrical extension cords if possible and never use them for periods exceeding 30 days. Never run extension cords under rugs, behind or beneath furniture.

We encourage you to contact Environmental Health & Safety if you have questions or need additional information at 882-7018 or http://ehs.missouri.edu/ehs/fire/seasonal-decorations