

OCWR Fast Facts

Holiday Office Decorations



Workplaces can use decorations to celebrate a number of festive occasions —from employee milestones to federal holidays. However, the office decorating team should take care to follow some best practices to keep colleagues and other employees safe throughout the celebrations. In addition to year-round guidance regarding power strips, stepladders, and general housekeeping, the following holiday-specific guidance can help to create a safe and fun atmosphere for your next workplace celebration.

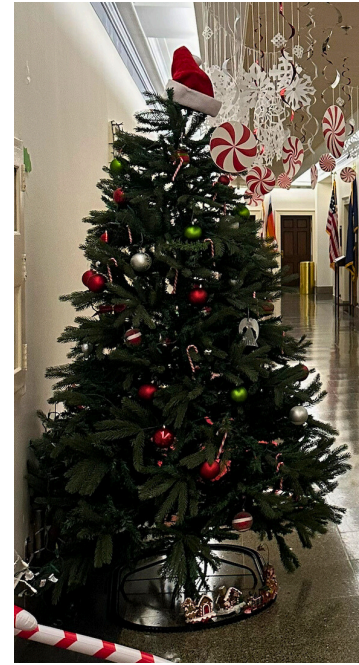
Decorations

- Keep all decorations away from heat or ignition sources.
- Strategically place decorations to avoid obstructing fire extinguishers, pull stations, fire sprinklers, emergency exits, and exit signs.
- Avoid decorating main corridors, as decorations may fall and create tripping hazards.
- Limit the total area of wall decorations to 20% or 50% of the total wall space if the area is protected by a fire sprinkler system. This helps to reduce the risk of fire spread.
- Practice electrical safety while using extension cords for decorative lights by avoiding daisy chains (see “General Reminders” below for more information).
- Remember to switch off powered decorations at the end of each business day.

This holiday-specific guidance can help to create a safe and fun atmosphere for your next workplace celebration.

Trees in the Workplace

- If using a tree as a decoration in the workplace, select an artificial one and check the recall list found on the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website](#) to ensure that the tree is safe.
- Check for a flame-resistant label on the tree.
- If the tree is equipped with lights, ensure that the lights are certified by a nationally recognized testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) or Intertek.
- If decorating the tree with string lights, do not connect more than three strings of incandescent (hot white light emitted by being heated) lights together.
- Ensure that any decorations placed on the tree are not prone to catching fire.
- Keep trees safely away from any heat or ignition sources.
- Place the tree in a location that will not block a common path of egress or a walkway.



General Reminders

- Do not connect or “daisy chain” extension cords or surge-protected power strips. Instead, use a power strip with a power cord length long enough to reach an outlet.
- Maintain good housekeeping practices, including the timely disposal of trash and the routine cleaning of food storage areas.
- If using a ladder, be sure to choose the appropriate one for the job and inspect it before use. Read and follow all labels or markings on the ladder regarding height restrictions and load limits.
- Ensure that paths of egress are wide enough to comply with the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Pathways open to members of the public should be at least 36 inches wide.

For further information, on holiday decoration safety, please visit these resources:

- National Safety Council https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/winter-safety/holiday?srsIid=AfmBOopNuBGRFsnpHLrbEbSIfrchHh2O8lWKF1n5CLbT6f_Wuo4odi7if
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission <https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/611.pdf>



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