



Information Bulletin

Christmas Trees in Public Buildings



Kirkland Fire/Building Department • 123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 • (425) 587-3650

In accordance with Washington State amendments to the International Fire Code, natural cut Christmas trees are allowed in most buildings, with the following exceptions:

- Group I occupancies
- Boarding homes and residential treatment facilities licensed by the State of Washington

When using a natural cut Christmas tree in a public building, the following rules apply:

1. Prior to setting up the tree, the trunk must have a fresh butt cut on a diagonal at least one-half (1/2) inch above the original cut.
2. The stand shall be of a type that is stable and that meets all of the following criteria:
 It shall hold the tree securely and be of adequate size to avoid tipping over
 The water level, when full, shall cover the tree stem at least 2 inches
 The water level shall be maintained above the fresh cut and checked at least once daily
 The stand shall be chosen based on the following estimates of water usage

Tree Stem Diameter (inches)	Minimum Support Stand Water Capacity (gallons)	Typical Daily Water Transpiration Amount (gallons)
Up to 4	1	¼ to 1
4 to 6	1½	1¼ to 1½
7 to 8	2	1¾ to 2
9 to 12	3	2¼ to 3
13 and over	4	Over 3

3. Electrical decorations used on trees shall be UL listed and in good repair.
4. Candles, open flame, and heating equipment shall not be allowed near a tree within a distance equal to the height of the tree.
5. The tree shall not be placed in such a manner or location which would obstruct any exit or other means of egress, or fire protection equipment such as fire extinguishers, pull stations, etc.
6. The tree shall be checked daily for dryness and shall be removed from the building whenever the needles fall off readily when a branch is shaken, or if the needles are brittle and break when bent.

Please feel free to contact the Kirkland Bureau of Fire Prevention at (425) 587-3650 with any additional questions.