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**The Newsladder
 and The Tallahassee Fire Department
 Present:**



**The Newsladder
 Special Holiday Edition— Holiday Season Safety**

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Helpful Tips for a Safe Holiday Season

The holidays are fast approaching and now is a good time to think about ways to get through them safely. Here are a few general guidelines:

- Keep matches, lighters, and candles out of the reach of children.
- Avoid smoking near flammable decorations.
- Make an emergency plan to use if a fire breaks out anywhere in the home. See that each family member knows what to do. **PRACTICE THE PLAN!**
- Avoid wearing loose flowing clothes—particularly long, open sleeves—near open flames - such as those of a fireplace, stove, or candlelit table.
- Never burn candles near evergreens. Burning evergreens in the fireplace can also be hazardous. When dry,

greens burn like tinder. Flames can flare out of control, and send sparks flying into a room, or up the chimney to ignite creosote deposits.

- Plan for safety. Remember, there is no substitute for common sense. Look for and eliminate potential danger spots near candles, fireplaces, trees, and/or electrical connections.

Holiday Tree Safety

Many artificial trees are fire resistant. If you buy one, look for a statement specifying this protection.

A fresh tree will stay green longer and be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree. To check for freshness, remember:

- A fresh tree is green.
- Fresh needles are hard to pull from branches.
- When bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break.

- The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin.
- When the trunk of a tree is bounced on the ground, a shower of falling needles shows that tree is too dry.
- Place tree away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources. Heated rooms dry trees out rapidly, creating fire hazards.
- Cut off about two inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. Trim away branches as necessary to set tree trunk in the base of a sturdy, water-holding stand with wide spread feet. Keep the stand filled with water while the tree is indoors.

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Helpful Tips for a Safe Holiday Season

(continued from page 1)



Holiday Light Safety

- Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety. Identify these by the label from an independent testing laboratory.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged sets or repair them before using.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house, walls or other firm support to protect from wind damage.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Turn off all lights on trees and other decorations when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short and start a fire.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and any person touching a branch could be electrocuted! To avoid this danger, use colored spotlights above or beside a tree, never fastened onto it!
- Keep "bubbling" lights away from children. These lights with their bright colors and bubbling movement can tempt curious children to break candle-shaped glass, which can cut, and attempt to drink liquid, which contains a hazardous chemical.

www.cpsc.gov

Holiday Shopping so Only Your Wallet Could Get Hurt

The hustle and bustle of holiday shopping can be made safer by following these simple tips:

Help keep your children safe while shopping -

- Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated.
- Keep children under age 4 in a stroller or supervise them closely.
- If you place your child in a shopping cart, always use the safety belt. Stay close to the cart. Never let your child stand in or push a shopping cart.



Don't be an easy victim for violent crime -

- Stay alert at all times and pay attention to your surroundings.
- Park in a well-lit space away from decorative bushes. Lock your car, roll up the windows, and hide packages in the trunk or under a blanket. Be especially alert in parking decks and underground garages.
- Don't overload yourself with packages.
- Have your car keys in hand before heading to the parking lot.

Be careful when riding on escalators -

- Make sure no one in your group has loose shoe laces, drawstrings, scarves, or mittens that could get trapped in the escalator.
- Hold your child's hand, face forward, and keep feet away from the edge of the steps.
- Never bring strollers, carts, or walkers on an escalator.

www.safeusa.org

Doll or Truck? Think about Safety When Considering a Toy

Tommy wants a toy truck and Polly a dolly, but are the toys safe for them? Here are some issues to think about when deciding on a toy for the little ones on Santa's list.

- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards for younger children.
- Before buying a toy or allowing your child to play with a toy that he

has received as a gift, read the instructions carefully.

- To prevent both burns and electrical shocks, don't give young children (under age ten) a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, buy toys that are battery-operated.
- Children under age three can choke on small parts contained in toys or games. Government regulations specify that toys for children under

age three cannot have parts less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches long.

- Children under age 8 can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Remove strings and ribbons from toys before giving them to young children.
- Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length. They could be a strangulation hazard for babies.

www.aap.org



Fill'er Up - Gas Station Safety

Holidays usually mean traveling, whether to visit family or friends or to take a winter vacation. Here are some safety tips to follow for your next trip to the gas station.

- Turn off your vehicle's engine when refueling.
- Keep gasoline and other fuels out of children's sight and reach. Gasoline is highly toxic, in addition to being a fire hazard. **NEVER** allow a child to pump gas.
- Don't smoke, light matches or use lighters while refueling.
- Pay attention to what you're doing. Pumping gas is the transfer of a hazardous substance; don't engage in other activities.
- If you must use any electronic device, such as cell phones, computers or portable radios while

refueling, follow manufacturer's instructions.

- Use only the refueling latch on the gasoline dispenser nozzle, if there is one. Do not jam the latch with an object to hold it open.
- To avoid spills, do not top off or overfill your vehicle.
- If a fire starts while you're refueling, don't remove the nozzle from the vehicle or try to stop the flow of gasoline. Leave the area immediately and call for help.
- Don't get in and out of your vehicle while refueling. A static electric charge can develop on your body as you slide across the seat, and when you reach for the pump, a spark can ignite gasoline vapor.
- If you must get into the vehicle during refueling,

discharge any static electricity by touching metal on the outside of the vehicle, away from the filling point, before removing the nozzle from your vehicle.

- Use only approved portable containers for transporting or storing gasoline. Make sure the container is in a stable position.
- Never fill a portable container when it is in or on the vehicle. Always place the container on the ground first. Fires caused by static charges have occurred when people filled portable containers in the back of pick-up trucks, particularly those with plastic bed liners. Removing the container will also prevent a dangerous spill of gasoline. When filling a portable container, keep

the nozzle in direct contact with the container. Fill it only about 95 percent full to leave room for expansion.

www.nfpa.org



Other Holiday Look-Outs

The holiday season is a busy one. Now is a good time to take a few minutes to think about how to make it a safer one. Here are a few extra tips to follow:

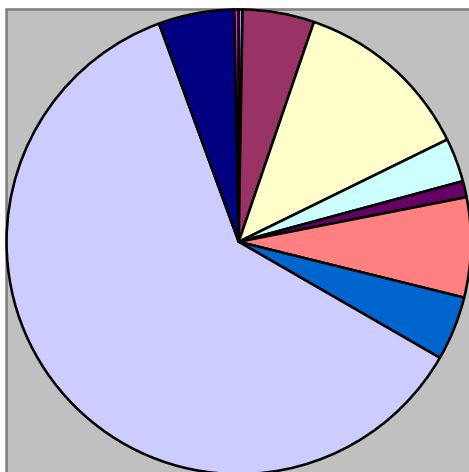
- Have visitors put luggage and purses up high where they can't be reached.
- Ask visitors with medications to secure them out of reach of little ones.
- Remove all wrapping papers, bags, paper, ribbons, and bows from tree and fireplace areas after gifts are opened. These items can pose suffocation and choking hazards to a small child or can cause a fire if near an open flame.
- Remember that the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots.
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.



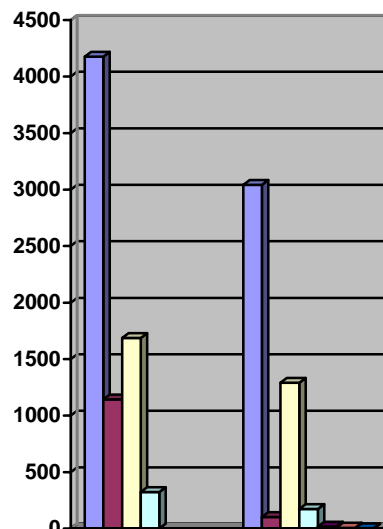
www.gerberlife.com

TFD by the Numbers: Fiscal Year 2008

Total Calls - 23,486



■ Airport Alerts- 43	■ Brush/Rubbish- 1170
■ Building Alarms- 2994	■ Structure Fires- 656
■ Vehicle Fires- 300	■ Vehicle Rescues-1617
■ Hazard Invest.- 1051	■ Medical- 14361
■ Service- 1201	■ Misc. Rescue-93



	Hrs	Number
■ Inspection	4178	3042
■ Investigation	1142	101
■ Plans review	1687	1291
■ Public Ed	322	173
■ Burn Permits		16
■ Arrests		7
■ Fire Deaths		3

From our Fire Department Family to you and yours, have a safe and happy holiday season! We are looking forward to bringing you more ways to keep your family safe in 2009.

**THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE AND
THE TALLAHASSEE FIRE DEPARTMENT
PRESENT:**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.TALGOV.COM

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**Did you change your smoke alarm batteries
when you changed your clock? Remember
“Change your Clock, Change your Batter-
ies.”**

TFD Employee Spotlight: Deputy Chiefs Steve Anderson and Steve Marks

“What a privilege to have worked in a profession that has provided so much personal satisfaction. Most of you probably know that I have worked in the profession since 1971. Starting as a firefighter in Tampa, moving through the ranks of Driver, Lieutenant, Captain, Division Chief and now Deputy Chief, my experiences have enriched my life. My hope is that you will experience the gifts that helping people in your community brings you. I look forward to my “new” life experiences, but I will be forever grateful for the relationships that I have enjoyed with you all through the years.”
...Chief Anderson

Chief Anderson is retiring in April.

“ I began my career in October 1980, moved up the ranks of Driver (1988), Lieutenant (1988), Captain (1992), District Chief (1997) and then in 2005, I was made Deputy Chief of Operations. I have truly enjoyed my time with the Department. The opportunity to work in the Fire Service has allowed me to do things I would not have been able to do otherwise. I would tell those starting their careers to develop a good relationship with your co-workers, give more than you ask for, and be safe.”
...Chief Steve Marks

Chief Marks will be retiring in January and has no immediate plans as of yet, except to enjoy his retirement.



Above: Dep. Chief Steve Anderson
Below: Dep. Chief Steve Marks

