

HOLIDAY AND EVENT DECORATIONS

PURPOSE:

This document provides the guidelines for use of holiday, temporary, and event decorations on Baylor University property in a safe manner. This document will also outline approved and prohibited materials.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Individuals will be responsible for complying with this policy when decorating their assigned workspace. It will be the responsibility of the hosting department or organization to ensure that all decorations for a Holiday or for a sponsored event comply with this policy, regardless if the event involves outside vendors, or non-Baylor participants

The Baylor University Department of Public Safety, or designated representative, may observe the decorations for compliance of this policy prior to the event.

A. Exit-Ways

The following listed requirements represent general guidelines for maintaining acceptable exits and exit-ways for events:

1. No person shall place, store, keep, or allow items to be placed in stairwells, corridors, elevators, exits or in the exit discharge areas leading from the building to the public area.
2. It is a violation of fire code policy to prop open any stairway enclosure door while decorating or as part of the final display.

B. Aisles

In each room where chairs, tables and chairs, or decorations are used, the arrangement shall be such to allow a clear path to each exit doorway. Aisles leading directly to exit doorways shall have a width of not less than 36 inches or as required by code.

C. Electrical

All controls, lights, appliances, or other electrical equipment used as a part of or in conjunction with decorations shall be installed in an approved manner, and all wiring shall be of sufficient capacity to safely conduct the required power supply loads.

D. Open Flames

1. The use of unguarded fires, flames in a fireplace, candles, or other forms of open flames shall not be permitted without written approval from the Baylor University Department of Public Safety.

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2. Guarded fires may be permitted with written approval of the Baylor University Department of Public Safety and the facility coordinator. Permitted uses of open flames are required to have fire safety equipment and trained personnel.

E. Prohibited Materials

The use of flammable materials is prohibited. The following commonly used materials cannot be flame-proofed and therefore may not be used for interior decoration under any circumstances:

- Hay
- Dry Moss
- Wood Shavings
- Straw
- Turpentine
- Sawdust
- Dry Leaves
- Confetti
- Flammable Liquids
- Corn Stalk
- Cotton
- Flammable Powders
- Corn Shucks
- Cedar Trees
- Bamboo
- Tumbleweed
- Cedar Branches

F. Tree Selection, Location, and Care

The use of live trees must be approved by the Baylor University Department of Public Safety. For safety reasons, only artificial trees should be used for interior decorations.

1. Only those artificial UL listed trees labeled “fire resistant,” “flame retardant,” or similarly indicating that the material used is non-combustible or resistive to burning shall be used.
2. Trees used indoors must be less than or equal to six feet tall. Any tree exceeding 6 feet tall shall not be used without written approval from the Baylor University Department of Public Safety. Trees shall not extend higher than 24 inches below the ceiling.
3. Trees must be located away from exits and paths to exits, being careful not to block doors, aisles, corridors, equipment, or access to facilities.
4. Keep trees away from heat sources such as air vents, large appliances, and lights.

G. Lighting Safety

1. Lighting devices using open flame or high heat, such as candles, lanterns, oil lamps, Halogen lamps, etc., are prohibited unless permitted by the Baylor University Department of Public Safety.
2. Each electric light set used must bear the Underwriters’ Laboratories (UL) label.
3. Inspect each set, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections. Discard damaged sets.
4. Use no more than three sets of lights per strand. Do not overload electrical outlets. Use only one UL labeled electrical cord. If additional outlets are needed, utilize a power strip/surge protector rather than extension cords and multi plug adapters.
5. Multi plug adapters are prohibited. Plugging extension cords into power strips/surge protectors is prohibited.

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6. Protect wires from damage. Do not run wires under carpet, through doorways, or across aisles or corridors. Do not place wires where they will be walked on. Do not use nails or tacks to hang wires. The use of approved cable crossings is permitted.
7. Do not place electric lights on a metallic tree. Use spotlights for illumination.
8. Unplug lights when not in use.

H. Outdoor Decorations

1. Decorative materials shall be flame-proofed or non-combustible.
2. Decorations shall be self-supporting and be placed as far away from buildings as possible. Utility equipment such as telephone poles, guy-wires, fire hydrants, gas or electric meters, or building service entrance wiring or connections shall not be used to support, as part of, or be obstructed by decorations. Decorations may not block access to egress from any building, driveway, or sidewalk; in addition, decorations cannot block access to any exterior plumbing, electrical, mechanical, or fire system equipment. Due care shall be exercised to avoid contact with any power supply overhead wiring when erecting or removing decorations.
3. All wiring, controls, lights, appliances, or other electrical equipment used as part of or in conjunction with decorations shall be UL listed and a type approved for outdoor use, installed in an approved manner, and of sufficient capacity to accommodate the electrical load imposed. There shall be no open splices, frayed wiring, cracked insulation, defective equipment, or other indications of weakness permitted in wiring. All exposed light bulbs, spotlights, floodlights, etc. shall be guarded. No light source shall be permitted to be in contact with any surface and such devices shall be securely anchored in place to prevent accidental upsetting if struck, and so-positioned that heat from the device will not create a hazard.
4. Fire extinguishing equipment shall be kept readily available and in operating order. Such equipment shall be available within seventy-five feet (75') of any outdoor decoration.
5. There shall be no smoking observed in the vicinity of outdoor decorations during the periods of their construction, use, and demolition.
6. Outdoor decorations shall be removed within forty-eight (48) hours following the event for which they are used. Failure to remove after forty-eight (48) hours subjects property to immediate removal, disposal, or destruction at expense of originating organization.

I. Other Decorations

1. Use only materials labeled as flame retardant or non-combustible.
2. Do not block or obscure exits, paths to exits, or exit lights. It is prohibited to cover exit lights or conceal means of egress doors with curtains, drapes, decorations, or similar materials.
3. Keep away from heat sources.
4. Do not hang decorations from or attach them to any fire protection equipment or fire alarm devices.

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5. Ceilings shall not be covered by decorative materials. No more than 30% of a wall shall be covered by decorative materials.
6. Where items are not fire retardant or non-combustible, a commercial flame retardant may be applied to the items. Items must be approved by the Baylor University Fire Safety Specialist, or designated representative.

J. Removal of Indoor Decorations

All decorations should be removed within twenty-four (24) hours upon completion of an event. Failure to remove after twenty-four (24) hours subjects property to immediate removal, disposal, or destruction at expense of originating organization.

K. Miscellaneous

1. The regulations listed are considered as general requirements. Additional requirements may be considered by the Baylor University Department of Public Safety, or designated representative, determined by the circumstances involved in individual events.
2. Reports of violations of these regulations shall be investigated by the Baylor University Department of Public Safety Fire Safety Specialist, or designated representative.

In cases where clarifications of this policy are necessary, the event coordinator or representative shall contact the Baylor University Department of Public Safety to discuss decorating plans and make arrangements not less than 72 hours in advance of installation.