

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

To Help Ensure a Merry Christmas

By Robert Schattschneider
VRFPD P.I.O.

It is that time of year again! Where does the time go? Wasn't it just Christmas a couple of months ago? Really? Already?

So, I would like to take the time to talk about some Christmas safety concerns to help ensure that everyone has at least a safe Christmas.

That real, freshly cut Christmas tree that's sitting in your favorite spot in the house, is the first item on my list of concerns. Make sure that you water your tree EVERY day! Why? Well for the obvious reason first. It will retain a lot of water if you continue to water it every day, which will help the needles to stay on it longer. But, secondly, that added moisture will help to

keep your tree from drying out through the Christmas holiday, reducing the chances of it catching on fire from defective, over heated Christmas tree lights.

Make sure that you do not place your tree near one of your heating ducts. Adding heated air near or under your Christmas tree will greatly increase the rate at which your tree will deplete its internal moisture. This will cause your needles to fall off faster and increase its flammability.

Now for all of those Christmas lights that you have strung all over your tree and throughout your home. Keep in mind the current load that you are placing on your electrical outlets. Overloading those outlets will increase your chances of electrical outlet and fuse panel failures. We do not want any electrical fires throughout this Christmas holiday season any more than you do!

Lastly, just a reminder that the number one cause of kitchen fires is leaving the kitchen and forgetting about those holiday dishes that are cooking on your stovetop and in your oven. Keep a close eye on your cooking devices so you can sit down with your family and loved ones for that great Christmas dinner that you have been getting ready for over the past few days.

Now Merry Christmas from your friends at the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District!



Winter Driving

By Robert Schattschneider
VRFPD P.I.O.

Winter driving can be a challenge, but the State of Oregon put together the "Oregon Winter Driving Guide," which you can find by using Google to view the complete guide.

First, be prepared. Have the items in your car that can really make a difference if you are caught in bad winter weather on Oregon's roads and highways.

Here is a list of items that are suggested to have in or on your vehicles:

- A jack, lug wrench and a shovel
- Chains or traction tires
- Flares
- A road map
- Extra warm clothes, boots, hats, gloves, blanket and or sleeping bag
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- First Aid Kit
- Matches or lighter
- Extra food and water

- Jumper cables
- Cell phone and adapter charger cords
- A pocket knife
- Extra washer fluid.

Tune up your vehicle by making sure that your antifreeze is good to -25 degrees. Make sure that your wiper blades are clean or new, and that your washer fluid level is full. Make sure that your heater and defroster are working properly to keep your vehicle and windshield warm and clear, and keep your gas tank on full.

Have someone check the condition and age of your vehicle's battery. Next, your tires. Check them for proper tread and inflation. Also make sure that they are traction tires made for snow and include a set of snow chains for those roads and highways that are posted with signage requiring chains.

Oregon law requires traction tires or chains for some sections of roads and highways

that are "posted" with signage stating that they are required on those sections. Don't wait until you are stuck to chain up. Chain up early when you know that you are going to be traveling on those sections of our roads and highways.

Some tips for winter driving can really help. First, do not use your cruise control on snow covered or icy roadways. Remember that bridges freeze first before the road surface.

Keep your hands at the 9 and 3 o'clock position on your steering wheel for best control of your vehicle.

If you lose traction, gradually slowdown without slamming on your brakes. Slamming on your brakes will only make your situation worse. Every action that you take while controlling

your vehicle, do so smoothly and gradually. Sudden turns, acceleration and braking will increase your odds of losing control on slippery surfaces.

Watch out for snow plows and sanding trucks. Don't follow them too closely and do not pass. On some sections of our highways, snow plows sometimes work side by side to clear the roadways quicker and more efficiently. If you attempt to pass one of these vehicles, you might not realize that there is another plow or sanding truck in front of the other one.

You can find out more about Oregon's chain laws at: www.TripCheck.com.

Personal Generator Usage

It's that time of year again where we all worry about power outages throughout the winter months. Those of us who have personal generators to supply our homes with electricity need to follow some important safety guidelines for everyone in your neighborhood and the linemen who work for West Oregon Electric.

Remember that when you connect your generator to power your home you need to disconnect the main circuit breaker in your breaker box. This prevents the power that you are supplying to your home from back feeding down the powerlines that lead away from your

home. When the electrical current back feeds down the lines away from your home, unsuspecting linemen are at risk of being electrocuted from your generator.

Remember that when you power up, DISCONNECT from the grid to protect those around you. If you have questions on the proper way to do this, please contact someone from West Oregon Electric for more information, or a qualified electrician.

Keep those Christmas lights blinking and have a Merry Christmas!

VOLUNTEERS WANTED



VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

VRFPD is currently accepting applications for Volunteer Fire Fighters.

- You must have a High School Diploma or G.E.D., a valid Oregon Driver's License, and be at least 18 years of age.

- Currently, you must be able to attend weekly training on Monday nights

- Willing to attend the Fire Academy

- Live or work (employer willing to let you respond to calls) within VRFPD's District

- Applications can be picked up at the Fire Station.

Here's What We Do!

VRFPD

555 E. Bridge St.
Vernonia, OR 97064
503-429-8252

VRFPD FIRE CHIEF
Earl Dean Smith
dc4502@yahoo.com
503-709-8821 (cell)
503-429-8252 (office)

VRFPD P.I.O.
Robert Schattschneider
pio.vrfpd@gmail.com
971-225-8332 (cell)
503-429-8252 (office)

Calls responded to November 1-30

Fire	1
Emergency Medical Service	26
Hazardous Condition	2
Service Call	8
Good Intent	4
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	1
Special Incident	0
No Emergency Found	0
False Alarm	0
Total	42