



Station 61: 17061 Rolling Creek Dr., Houston, TX., 77090

Station 62: 4362 Louetta Rd., Spring, TX., 77388

Station 63: 21455 Imperial Valley, Houston, TX., 77073

Dashing through the streets, on a fire truck here we go!
On our way to rescue, a house that's all a glow...
The 911 came in, excited and distressed.
The smoke was growing quickly, please rescue with your best!

The candle had ignited, the curtain from the breeze.
It smoldered all alone, unattended, and quietly,
It took but a few minutes, to capture into flames,
But once it was ignited the excitement began again!

Oh, hear those horns, and those sirens!
Coming your way!

The fire fighters are here to help you out on
your worst day! Heh! ...
Written to the tune "Jingle Bells."

As grinnable as this little glib is... unfortunately it is real. Candles pose a great threat to celebratory functions. It is so easy to forget to blow out the candles when you're tired from a party or drowsy from tasty food and drink. Here are a few safety thoughts when dealing with live candle flames spread about your home for decoration.

- Consider using battery operated candles.
- Candles should be twelve inches from anything flammable.
- Place candles in stable candle holders.
- Place candles where they are not easily knocked over.
- Flame burns, wax burns, it hurts for weeks.
- Candles are not toys.
- Oh, and did I say, blow out the candles when you leave the room!

The safety of your family and guest in your home depends on YOU! Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Courteous, and BLOW OUT the CANDLES!



Emergency Services District #28

Effective September 1, 2019, ESD#28 is giving back to the community with the Ponderosa Fire Department (Emergency Services District #28), achievement of the Public Protection Class (PPC) rating of 2.

This is the Insurance Services Office (ISO) nationwide community fire protection rating system that utilizes water supplies, communications and fire department capabilities that affects most insurance policy costs, and in our case will reduce most insurance rates. You should contact your insurance agent soon to obtain the savings.

Season's Greetings From ESD#28 Board of Directors



Wishing our firefighters and their families, as well as our residents a very Happy Holiday Season and the best New Year!
Michael Jenkins, President
Harris County ESD#28

May this message of Christmas fill your life with joy and peace. Best wishes to you and your family during this holiday season.
Ken Koenig, Treasurer
Harris county ESD#28

Happy Holidays and Seasons Greetings from my house to your house! May we all enjoy the holidays and find peace and joy in the simple things of life!
Erica Smiley
Harris County ESD#28

Wishing everyone a merry, safe Christmas! Be sure to check all your seasonal decorations for wear and tear as you don't want to invite the Fire Grinch in to spoil your Holidays!
Edson Dronberger, Vice President
Harris County ESD#28





Happy Holidays!

It has been my privilege to serve on your Harris County Emergency Services District 28 (ESD28) since January of 2016. As the Holiday Season approaches, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to our community for your continued support.

Serving the good people of ESD28 through the very competent and dedicated first responders of the Ponderosa Fire Department continues to be an honor. I very much admire and appreciate the selfless responses of these men and women who have worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of our community. The trust and support you have given the members of ESD28 and The Ponderosa Fire Department to protect our community makes the effort worthwhile and successful.

May this special time of the year bring joy, peace and cherished moments and memories to you, your family, friends, and neighbors. May the coming New Year be without need of emergency services for your household. Rest assured that if you do need help, competent and reliable first responders are here to serve you.
Happy Holiday Season and Happy New Year!
Shirley Jauma, Secretary
Harris County Emergency Service District 28

Fireplace Safety for the Holidays

As much as we would love to have our fireplaces burning October through April in Texas. It is not a frequent occurrence. Unfortunately, our fireplaces burn intermittently and sometimes not at all. Because of this, in Texas we must take extra precaution with our fireplaces in our homes. Here are some tips to remember:

- Use a screen at the base of the fireplace. Use a flash arrester at the top of the chimney to keep the sparks off the roof.
- Never use any paper or flammable liquids in the fireplace.
- To set the fire: Make sure the damper is open before building the fire. Use aged wood and an approved product designed for igniting a fire in a fireplace. You can also use a gas fired log lighter that has been installed by a licensed plumber and purchased through a reliable company. Read the labels to make sure you are using the correct items for the designed purpose.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!
Harris County ESD#28

Visit our websites at:

www.ponderosavfd.org,
www.esd28.com

Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/PonderosaFD/>.





Ponderosa Fire Department Station 61



Dear Neighbors,
As Christmas approaches, it is a good time to reflect on the strength of our tight-knit community. We have seen firsthand, during challenges like Hurricane Harvey, and Beryl, how we come together to look out for one another. That sense of selfless work and responsibility is what makes Ponderosa second to none.

Christmas isn't just a time for celebration, but a reminder that we all have a part to play in creating the world we want to live in. Whether it's lending a hand to a neighbor, ensuring our homes are safe for the season, or simply sharing kindness, our actions ripple through the community, making it better for everyone.

This year let's carry that spirit of care and responsibility into the holidays and beyond. Together, we build something meaningful—something worth preserving.

Calvin Hurst and all of us at Station 61,
We wish you all a safe, joyful, and peaceful Christmas.



Courtesy of Joe Buvid Photograph



Leave fireworks in the box. Look at the stars instead!

As we approach our wonderful Holiday Season, I want to remind you of the dangers of fireworks. You've seen the news, and it often highlights incidents that we would rather not witness during this time.

Please resist the temptation to buy fireworks. If you do choose to purchase them, consider your neighbors, pets, and the mess that larger fireworks can create. Remember to always soak used fireworks thoroughly in a bucket of water before placing them in a trash can.

We have unfortunately seen many losses and injuries during this blessed time, which is truly sad.

Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season, and please stay safe!

Fred Windisch, Fire Chief



End 2024 and Begin 2025 SPARKLER FREE

Sparklers are often thought of as being safe, but they generate heat levels comparable to a welding torch. Follow these helpful sparkler safety guidelines.

It is recommended that sparklers are not given as a celebratory toy to ages 5 years old and under.

- Make sure everyone who handles sparklers wears gloves.
- Sparklers should be held at arm's length while being lit and only light one at a time.
- Don't wave sparklers around other people or close to other people. Especially their face. Stay 6 ft away.
- Never hold a baby in your arms while you are holding a sparkler.
- When the sparkler has burned out, place it hot end down in a bucket of cold water or sand and leave it there for several hours. They will stay hot for a long time.
- Always wear shoes when using sparklers.

Sparklers can burn over 1000 degrees, so the key to safety is to prevent burns. Third degree burns start at 150 degrees. Make sure your child knows how to hold the sparkler below the point in which it will burn down.

If you decide to celebrate with sparklers, please consider your child's age and maturity level. This includes their ability and willingness to follow rules. Parents who are hesitant about these areas may consider a safer alternative such as LED sparklers with no flame.

Keep your family safe this year without the added stress of an accident or fire.



Ponderosa Fire Department Station 62



Here it is another holiday season where family and friends get together to share stories, smiles, and heartfelt hugs. As we come into this season it is important to remember that family, friends, and neighbors play a big part in all our communities.

Ponderosa Fire Department Station #62 wants to remind everyone how much we appreciate serving your community and being there for you in your time of need. As much as we prepare for your worst day in saving your home and sometimes your life. Our wish for you this holiday season is that you stay safe.

May the only time you see and hear the fire trucks during the holiday season is at the parades and dedicated events in each neighborhood.

We enjoy serving our communities and may all your wishes come true!

Happy Holidays!
Ponderosa Fire Department Station 62
"The Rowdy Bunch"





Lighting Up the Holidays

Every year, hundreds of home fires start with decorative lighting. Whether your preference is for 25,000 twinkle lights or traditional candles in the window or on the tree, Ponderosa Fire Department wants to make sure your holiday illumination is safe and affordable.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, every year 790 home fires begin with holiday decorations and another 150 fires begin with Christmas trees. Innovations in holiday décor, however, help make the seasons nights safer and less expensive.

Here are a few tips for lighting up:

- Be sure you are using lights that have been safety tested and approved by OSHA-certified laboratories, like Underwriters Laboratory (UL) and are appropriate for the way they will be used.
- Be sure lights for the outside are labeled as outdoor lighting.
- Check all your lights, especially older ones for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections and toss any damaged sets.
- Inspect your extension cords. Beware of any extension cords that are extremely stiff or brittle.
- Never run extension cords under rugs or coil them tightly around themselves, which can overheat.
- Consider a programmable timer to your strings of lights to ensure lights are not accidentally left on. This will also help you regulate your energy cost.

- Plug outdoor lights and decorations into “GFCI” grounding outlets. Portable GFCI units can be purchased where electric supplies are sold.
- Always look up before decorating outdoors. Never raise ladders or extend objects into or near power lines.
- Holiday lights using light-emitting diodes (LEDs) use one-tenth the energy of traditional mini-lights and are cooler to the touch, reducing the risk of fire.
- Always turn off lights when you are not home.
- Use extension cords that are rated to carry the electrical loads connected to them and are rated for appropriate indoor/outdoor use.
- To reduce the risk of fire, do not overload a circuit.
- Use extreme caution and do not drive nails, staples, or tacks through wiring insulation Use the correct clips such as insulated holders or plastic clips to hang lights indoors.
- Be careful when putting lights up with hot glue. The glue can melt the insulation around the wire.
- Always check for electrical cord fraying when using lights from year to year.
- When connecting Christmas lights, connect three strands of incandescent lights together safely. With LED lights you can connect as many as 4-5 LED mini-light strands together. Read the packaging labels, there are instructions of how many light strands to connect.
- Keep your live Christmas tree hydrated in the event of a fire; a dry tree will burn much faster than a well-watered one which is decorated.
- Do not run electrical light cords through doors or windows because the cord can become damaged.
- Plan your outside display before you begin. Have a clear idea of where to hang the lights and where the outlets are along with the electrical load they will carry.

Keep the Ponderosa Fire Department service communities safe with common sense actions.

An ounce of prevention is worth saving the holidays!



Ponderosa Fire Department Station 63



It's that time of year when our neighborhoods, communities, families, and friends are in the last days of 2024. What a rush it is to get to all the parties, events, shows, and religious happenings to close out the year. In our big hurry to get from here to there remember how important it is to slow your roll down and be courteous on the roadways. Distracted driving can cause a holiday celebration to turn into a holiday nightmare.

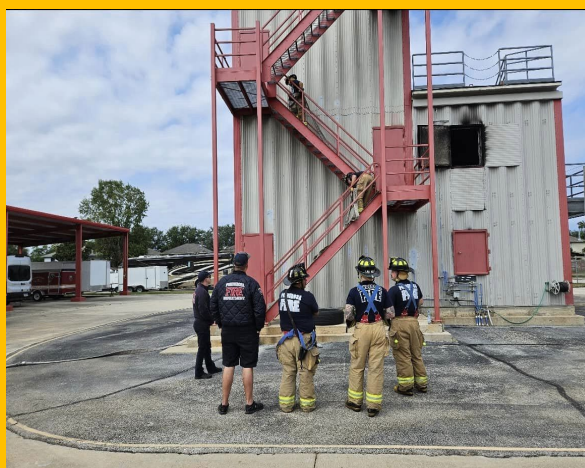
So many memories are shared and made and so many plans for the new year are dreamed. Training to be a fire fighter starts as a dream or an idea and becomes a reality at Station 63. This season we are grateful for Station 63 and all the dedication and hard work that is put in by the men and women who train at this facility. We appreciate all the effort, tenacity, grit, and determination it takes to become a fire fighter.

Training at this facility helps neighborhoods and communities across our area be safe for the holiday season. Be sure to thank a fire fighter for the willingness to give of their heart and their soul to keeping you safe.

May your 2024 be filled with heartwarming joy and may you find in 2025 your dreams come true.

From all the fire fighters and trainees of
Station 63,

Happy Holidays!





Cut the Tree, Water the Tree

While Christmas tree fires are a possibility, the damage they can cause is severe and costly. It is estimated that half of reported tree fires are due to electrical malfunctions and heat-related sources. Therefore, exercising caution with a live tree in your home is crucial, and educating your family about tree safety is essential.

Always choose a fresh-cut tree with soft, pliable green needles that do not fall off when touched. Before placing the tree in the stand, cut two inches from the base of the trunk to allow for better water absorption.

Make sure to water your tree daily. A live tree needs to stay hydrated to prevent it from drying out and becoming highly flammable. A six-foot-tall tree requires about one gallon of water per day.

Keep your live tree at least three feet away from any heat source, such as radiators, fireplaces, heat-generating light sources, or candles. Additionally, ensure that your tree does not obstruct exits or footpaths.

Never use burning candles to decorate your tree; instead, opt for battery-operated flameless LED candles.

After the holidays, dispose of your tree before it dries out and starts shedding needles. Dry trees are a significant fire hazard, so do not keep your tree in your home or garage. Look for a recycling program in your community for tree disposal.

Consider investing in a tree safety system, which will alert you when the water level in the tree stand is low or if a fire starts. Also, make sure to keep smoke alarms in working order and test them monthly.

Metallic trees are becoming popular again with modern day home décor trends. Adding additional lights to a metallic tree is not advised whether it be a string of lights or clamp on lights. Use your additional lights above, besides, or below the tree to enhance the metallic shimmer. This will save you from electrical shock if your additional lights become faulty.

With small children avoid using sharp or breakable decorations. Children will grab trimmings that have small removable parts that appear to be candy or food. Bubble lights are on this list too. Check your tinsel too and icicles made of plastic are preferred vs. the metallic tinsel. All of which could be easily swallowed by children and animals.

Check your snow spray and use nontoxic snow. Do not use spun glass “angel hair” that can irritate your eyes and skin. Snow spray can irritate your family members who have asthma.

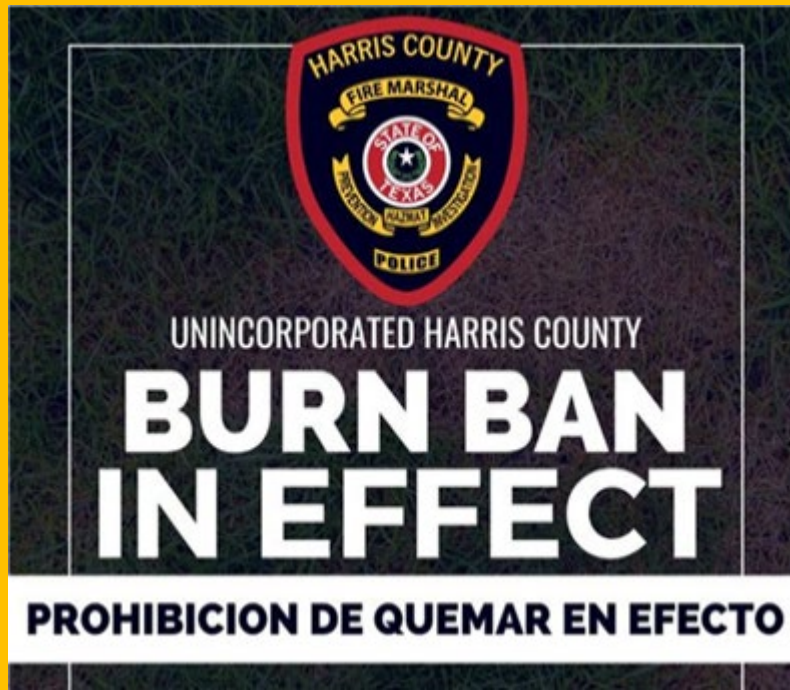
Pets like to chew, and the smells of the holidays can cause curiosity. If you see your pet chewing on branches of the tree whether it be live or artificial; it is coated with harmful sprays, insecticides, fertilizers, and fire retardants. These chemicals can make your pet extremely ill so be aware and use precaution as a fence around the tree or place your tree on a table.

Ladder safety is needed when reaching the higher branches of the tree. Your ladder should be sturdy because as you decorate the tree you will lean in all directions. It is always wise to have someone with you when you are on a ladder.

Mold and mildew can be present on live Christmas trees and even on boughs and wreaths. To avoid this source of mold in your home, consider using artificial trees and decorations. If you still prefer live greenery, try hosing them down before bringing them inside to remove existing mold spores.

Enjoying a safe holiday season is important for you and Ponderosa Fire Department. Exercising caution in all your holiday traditions to keep everyone safe is necessary for celebration success.

**Keep everyone safe and
everyone
home for the holidays!**



About those Firework Sales and Burn Bans

While the commissioners agree to proceed with the fireworks sales, it will be under certain restrictions.

Following state legislation and the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI), which assesses the risk of forest fires, the commissioner's court has approved restrictions on the sale of some fireworks namely bottle rockets.

The dates of December 20, 2024, until midnight January 1, 2025, is the time limit for firework sales. Check with Harris County Commissioners court on restrictions for fireworks if you have questions.

As always, it is highly recommended leaving fireworks to the experts and the professional public displays.

If you choose to use consumer fireworks, be sure to read the caution labels carefully, have a water source available for emergencies, and soak used fireworks thoroughly before disposing of them in the trash.

Burn bans prohibits all outdoor burning unless it occurs within an enclosure that contains all flames and sparks.

However, certain activities are permitted, including outdoor burning authorized by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), approved ceremonial fires, and non-commercial cooking like backyard cookouts and barbecues. Additionally, welding, and other "hot work" can be carried out if they comply with county fire code regulations.

Violation of the ban is a Class "C" misdemeanor, punishable by up to a \$500 fine. In addition, any person who starts a fire that causes damage to property without the owner's consent may be charged with Reckless Damage or Destruction, a Class "C" misdemeanor, or arson, a felony.

Preparation is critical when protecting your property and home from the threat of fire.

Here are a few effective actions and precautions you can take to minimize the risk:

- DO NOT burn on “red Flag” or windy days and think twice before burning outdoors when KBDI approaches 700 or more.
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) tanks should be far enough away from building for valves to be shut off in case of fire. Keep the area around the tank clear of flammable vegetation.
- Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied building.
- All combustibles such as firewood, wooden picnic tables, boats, and stacked lumber should be kept away from structures.
- Clear roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid the build-up of flammable materials such as leaves and other debris.
- Remove branches from trees to a height of 15 feet or more.
- Remove dead trees from your front and back yard which are close to your home and your neighbor’s home.
- Have fire tools ready such as a ladder long enough to reach your roof, a shovel, a rake, and a bucket or two for water.
- Place connected garden hoses at all sides of your home for emergency use.
- Assure you and your family know all emergency exits from your home.
- Have an escape plan for all areas of your home.

If you see an unattended fire, call 9-1-1 and notify your local fire department immediately. Even a small fire can spread quickly and threaten your neighbors and property.



P O N D E R O S A FIREFIGHTER

HARRIS COUNTY ESD #28

17061 Rolling Creek Dr.
Houston, TX 77090



This publication is intended for the residents within the Ponderosa Fire Department service area. If you received this newsletter in error, we hope you still read it and utilize the fire safety information.

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Fire fighters are more than just professionals who put out fires.

They are your family, your brothers and sisters who risk their lives every day to protect you and your community. They are the ones who run towards danger when everyone else runs away. They are the ones who sacrifice their time, their health, and sometimes their lives for the greater good. They are the ones who show courage, compassion, and dedication in the face of adversity.

Why do we need fire fighters? Because they are the heroes we depend on in times of crisis. Because they are the ones who save lives, property, and the environment. Because they are attempting to help you while you are having the worst day of your life. Because they are the ones who make our world a safer and better place. And BECAUSE they are the ones who inspire us to be brave, generous, and resilient.

Support your firefighters! They deserve our respect, our gratitude, and our help. They need our support and advocacy. They need us to stand with them, to cheer them on, and to thank them for their service.

**From our HOUSE to your HOUSE!
Happy New Year!**

