



HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK CITY, INC.

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TO: General Managers – Member Hotels

From: Joseph E. Spinnato 

Re: Holiday Decorations

Date: November 17, 2014

We are distributing the attached memorandum once again for your information on the issue of holiday decorations.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office.

Best regards.

JES/lef
Attachment

FIRE DEPARTMENT REGULATION ON CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

The Fire Department has issued regulations covering the use of Christmas decorations, which are similar to those in effect last year. As has been the case in previous years, written notification must be given to the Fire Commissioner of the use of decorative greens, but no reply will be sent to the hotels. For your information, the regulations are set forth below:

"Tests were conducted for flameproofing and the removal of pitch from Christmas trees. The results of these tests showed that flameproofing of Christmas trees was not satisfactory. Accordingly, that part of Local Law No. 29, 1943, which reads:

'...Nothing in this paragraph shall permit the use of hemlock, balsam, Spanish moss or decorative greens which contain pitch' (Section C19-161.1, Administrative Code.)

must be deemed to prohibit the use of Christmas trees or any decorations made of Christmas tree branches in any building of a public character, including a hotel, theater, restaurant, public hall, department store and building used or intended to be used for purposes of public assembly – and a building where a large number of persons congregate."

"The following regulations are promulgated to permit a limited amount of decorative greens in the aforementioned places subject to specific conditions as follows:

1. The owner, operator or manager of the establishment must give written notification to the Fire Commissioner of his intention to maintain decorative greens during the Christmas Season.
2. The decorative greens must be properly flameproofed with a chemical approved by the New York Board of Standards and Appeals in such a manner as to retard the spread of fire.
3. An affidavit testifying to the above facts must be forwarded to the Division of Fire Prevention, New York Fire Department, signed by the flameproofing concern doing the job, or the responsible head of the department store, retail shop, hotel or similar place, in the event that personnel of the establishment are employed to perform this task.

4. * In no event are the decorative greens to be permitted to remain in the establishment after January 2nd of the insuring year.
5. The owner, operator or manager of the establishment shall provide such fire extinguishers or water buckets as the Fire Commissioner may direct and which must be readily available in case of emergency.
6. No stuffed furniture, rugs or combustible material shall be permitted in close proximity to the decorative greens.
7. No combustible decorations shall be permitted on the decorated greens.
8. In no instance may such decorations be used upon a combustible framework, or used in conjunction with combustible material unless said material is properly flameproofed in conformity with the above regulations. In every instance these decorations should be removed as soon as they show signs of deterioration or drying out.
9. Nothing in these rules shall be construed to apply to churches or other places of worship.

ARTIFICIAL TREES AND DECORATIONS

Attention is called to the hazards of artificial Christmas trees as stated in the
N.F.P.A. "Fire News" (October - 1966) which reported that tests have
shown
the following:

1. Trees made of:
 - a. 100% Polystyrene
 - b. 100% Polypropylene
 - c. 100% Polyethyleneburn and support combustion.

* Hotels wishing an extension of time should write to:
Chief Thomas Jensen, Division of Fire Prevention,
9 Metro Tech Center, Brooklyn, New York 11201-3857

2. Some artificial trees imported from Hong Kong may burn with some violence. Flammability of shipments should be carefully ascertained.
3. Artificial trees made from some styrene materials are flammable.
4. Trees made of 100% Polyvinylchloride give the best performance with charring only and no continued combustion. Some trees made of certain mixtures of Polyvinylchloride and other plastics are relatively non-flammable.

ARTIFICIAL DECORATIONS IN PUBLIC PLACES

Any building of a public character, including a hotel, theater, restaurant, public hall, department store, a building where large numbers of people congregate, and a building used or intended to be used for purposes of public assembly (churches and places of worship are excluded) shall comply with the following regulations requirements where artificial decorations are used for decorative purposes.

1. Provide an 'affidavit' from the decorating company or other responsible person stating that the artificial decorations installed in the stated locations and made of the stated material are inherently fire resistant. Accompanying such affidavit shall be a 'certificate of test' or stated material, from a recognized testing company indicating that tests were made in accordance with procedures of Board of Standards and Appeals Calendar No. 294-40-SR and meets the requirements of fire resistance as specified by Calendar No. 294-40-SR.

The affidavit and certificate of test shall be forwarded to the Division of Fire Prevention. A copy of the affidavit and a copy of the certificate of test shall remain on premises until decorations are removed.

NOTE: A certificate of test is not required when the artificial decorations used have a Board of Standards and Appeals approval number which is noted in the affidavit.

The foregoing regulations apply only to premises in New York City.

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