



Five Minutes to **Fire Safety** HEALTHCARE EDITION

Topic: Combustible Decorations

Decorations find their way into our homes, offices, and workplaces. They reflect the weather outside, the holidays and seasons, and soften the impersonal feel of offices, hallways, and gathering spaces.

Decorations are also a concern from a fire and life safety standpoint. One of the primary concerns with decorations - especially in corridors and hallways - is the increased fuel load they add to the interior finish. The 2000 edition of the Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) makes several references to interior finish and decorations within healthcare facilities. By extension, CMS Form 2786 contains at least four K-Tags that reference interior finish and decorations.

Certain types of decorations can be treated so that the fuel load risk is minimized: privacy curtains, window blinds, and draperies can all be treated to meet the requirements of NFPA 101 Ch. 10.

Other types of decorations can not be treated and must be used sparingly. This includes combustible decorations one might typically find on doors, walls, and ceilings - cards, artwork, paper, and some types of seasonal decorations. These must be used in limited quantities, where the decorations cover no more than 10% of the door or 10% of the corridor wall of the smoke compartment.

As you add decorations within your facility, remember that your decorations are adding to the fuel load of the hallways and corridors. Choose non-combustible decorations and limit the use of combustibles.



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