



Five Minutes to ***Fire Safety***

Topic: Prom and Dance Decorations

Prom season is fast approaching, and with this hallmark event come a variety of fire and life safety hazards. School administrators and student or parent organizations involved with prom party planning should keep safety first and foremost on their list of goals. Those doing the decorating or planning may create a dangerous situation without realizing it.

There are certain key points to remember when planning your school's prom and post-prom activities:

- Make sure all exits are accessible and free from impediments. Also make sure that all exit signs can be clearly seen and aren't hidden by any decorations.
- The minimum clear width in exit corridors must be maintained at six feet.
- Combustible materials like paper or fabric can not make up more than 20% of ceilings and walls, unless the material meets an appropriate level of flame resistance.
- Highly flammable materials (hay bales, etc.) can not be used inside for any reason.
- Abide by all established occupancy limits. If you're not sure how many people a space can safely hold, ask!
- Do not hang any decorations (fabric, streamers, posters, etc.) from sprinkler pipes or sprinkler heads.
- Maintain a minimum of 18" between sprinkler heads and any prop or decoration placed underneath it.
- Check the fire alarm system to make sure it's functioning properly.

In addition to these requirements, use common sense as well. If special lights are being used, examine the cords to make sure they aren't frayed and are in good working order. Don't overload circuits, and follow manufacturer directions when using Christmas tree lights, extension cords, and power strips. Plan ahead for emergencies: if the tornado sirens sound or some other emergency occurs, have a plan to get students to safety.

By keeping safety in the forefront of planning, we can all make sure prom nights across Kansas end in excitement instead of tragedy.

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