

Issue Christmas Tips

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Christmas trees, toys, wrap-pings, and decorations can be costly fire hazards. Don't let a preventable or careless fire provide the headlines for a Christmas tragedy, warned Westland Fire Chief Ralph Savini.

Consider the following safety suggestions and make the Yuletide season not only a merry one, but a safe one, too, Savini advised the community.

"Select a freshly cut tree—one that has been stored out doors. Make sure the tree holder is secure, and the butt of the tree is standing in water. Add water periodically, it helps the tree stay green—a dried out tree is hazardous.

"Don't locate trees near stairways, doors, or passageways. If electric lights are used the tree should not be near any grounded surfaces such as pipes, radiators, etc.

"Do not use lighted candles on trees, nor in windows around curtains and drapes. Use only electric lights and make certain the wiring is in perfect condition. When using electric lights for window decorations be sure the lights are covered with a plastic shield.

"Use no plastic foams for decorations that have not been treated for fire resistance. Don't use cotton, paper, or other flammable material for decorating the base of a tree.

"Don't place any electrical powered devices in close proximity to a tree—this includes powered toys.

"You'll be much safer purchasing electrical toys and various electrical appliances with the Underwriters Laboratory approval. Always look for the (UL) label on such devices.

"Make certain tree lights are not over the household electrical circuit. If circuits are protected by fuses—use only 15 ampere fuses for maximum protection from electrical fire.

"After unwrapping gifts—immediately dispose of all paper, cartons, ribbons, etc. Don't let it pile up around the house.

"Use only fire-proof decorations and costumes for Christmas parties and other festivities.

"Make certain when purchasing imitation trees they are of fire-proof variety. Look for the Underwriters Label (UL).

"Never leave home, or go to bed with tree lights left on.



Assessments Are Explained by City

Westland taxpayers, or their mortgage companies, received their 1966 school and county tax bills last week, amid public concern and confusion arising out of the new assessment laws.

The new law, known as Public Act 408, was adopted by the state legislature a year ago and requires assessments to be raised to 50 per cent of the true market value of the property.

But since many communities' assessments are below that 50 per cent level, a state equalization factor is applied to the property assessment figure shown on the city assessor's tax rolls to raise that level. This is done to bring uniformity and a degree of equality across the state.

To further explain the issue, Westland City Assessor Manuel Lentine, Jr., has asked The Observer to reprint the following background of the issue.

"Our 1967 tax bill reflects the State Equalization Factor of 1.25, which means that because we have assessed valuations based on approximately 43% of market value rather than the 50 per cent of market value as directed by the State Constitution and the Michigan State Tax Commission, we have been equalized up to 50 per cent market value.

"Basically this means that for every \$1 of tax levied by the School and County, the State Tax Commission automatically increases it to \$1.25.

"However, we have already completed a thorough re-assessment program in the City of Westland which is in compliance with Act 409. All property is now assessed at 50 per cent of market value, and these assessments will appear on the 1967 City tax roll for the first time. This will automatically eliminate State Equalization in any form.

"This means that if the tax rate for any unit of government is \$5 a thousand, it will remain \$5 a thousand. Assuming the local tax rates are adjusted in 1967, the higher assessment should produce the same amount of taxes paid as when the assessments were based on 43 per cent of market value. The only increase would be about 10 per cent which is the Economic Condition Factor (E.C.F.) for this area. In essence this means that construction cost 10 per cent more today than it did ten years ago.

"In 1963 all buildings were depreciated, resulting in a lower assessment; although this was not evident to the taxpayer because of a slight increase in the school rate at that time. This procedure was to take place every five years.

"However, since we had to do this item in computing the 50 per cent assessed values, we decided to apply to all buildings their respective depreciation factor which was not supposed to have taken place until 1968. In this way most of the increase will be off set due to the building depreciations which ranged from 3 per cent to as much as 8 per cent depending on the age of the buildings. The next re-assessment program will take place also in 1967.

"For your information on the tax rates for the last three years for the various School Districts located in Westland as well as the tax rates for the County are itemized as follows:

	City '66 Rub & Sch Cnty	Twp. '65 PCHA Tot.
Wayne Community	1965 42.21 8.77	51.98
NA 71 code on	1965 37.83 8.04	45.87
Tax Roll	1964 38.32 4.23	42.55
Nankin Mills	1966 48.74 9.77	58.51
NA 66 code on	1965 43.53 9.04	52.57
Tax Roll	1964 44.47 9.23	53.70
Livonia	1966 43.84 9.77	53.61
NA 77 code on	1965 39.94 9.04	48.98
Tax Roll	1964 37.94 9.23	47.17

*—includes .77 for Community College.

Parent-Teacher Conferences Are Thurs., Friday

Parent-teacher conferences will be held this week Thursday and Friday, at Wayne Memorial High School and Glenn High School.

Thursday's will be at 7-9 p.m. Parent-teacher conferences will be held all day Friday. They begin at 8:00 a.m. and recess for lunch at 11:00 a.m. Conferences in the afternoon will begin at 1 p.m. and continue until 4 p.m.

George Bell, principal at Wayne Memorial High School, and Frank Higgins, principal at Glenn High School, announced that classes will be dismissed on Friday to allow parents to visit high school teachers and administrators.

Higgins said "This is an opportunity for parents to meet the teachers at Glenn High School on an individual conference basis to discuss progress at school."

Bell said "Much value can be gained from the parent-teacher conferences and I strongly urge all parents to take advantage of this opportunity to visit the school and talk with the staff."

Both Bell and Higgins say "Many potential failures, dropouts, personal problems could be solved before they become serious through parent teacher conferences."

Garden City Club Plans Yule Program

The Garden City Business and Professional Women's Club will hold its annual Christmas Party, featuring a skit called "Hidden Talents," by its officers, at the Hillside Inn, Plymouth, Thursday, Dec. 15.

In the skit will be Fran Tubedean, president; Margaret Kirk, first vice president; Myra Roose, second vice president; Maybelle Shon, recording secretary; Evelyn Fitzpatrick, corresponding secretary; Judy Santeu, treasurer; and Rose Schlawaske, parliamentarian.

There will also be games, Christmas songs and gift exchanges.

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