

As effective as a subtle fabric or as functional as a well-designed chair, it can be a Wow or a Whisper

Wows and Whispers

News & comment from
THE SILK FOREST

We're now on the third edition of *Wows and Whispers* and hopefully not suffering from the curse of the sequel.

This time we're back on fire standards and how artificial foliage can be made fire resistant.

But in line with our policy of lifting the bushel...

What do you do if you're doing a Christmas scene which is going to be seen by millions over a long period? What if you need to illustrate the family roast and keep it around for a long time - like the whole of December?



Artificial Roast Turkey as seen on ITV's "This Morning"
©ITV Plc

What you can't do, especially on TV, is have a new roast turkey every day. The answer is artificial food but the camera has a habit of picking up the minute details that betray the truth. The producers of the ITV show, "This Morning" were very cautious, they knew how important it was to have something that was as near the real thing as you can get.



Some more hyper realistic artificial food this time attached to a tree

We put our Turkey up for the audition. The voices in the dark at the back of the auditorium gave her the role of lead Turkey for the whole shoot.

Since she came back she's been an unbearable Diva, demanding her own shelf in the warehouse, and a special box for her entourage. But when you're as good looking as this, we'll indulge her. She's worth it!

Fire Standards some pitfalls and how to avoid them

Previously we talked about the fire "Test Cert" that wasn't worth a candle.

Now that's out of the way, let's look at the different way of achieving fire resistance in artificial plants. Basically, fire retardants work in more or less the same way. They release a chemical which douses the flame by starving it of oxygen. Whilst in contact with the source of flame, the fabric will continue to burn but once that source of fire is removed, it should stop burning. Most specifications give a limited time for this to happen usually 7 or 8 seconds after the removal of the flame.

There are two ways of achieving this. Applying a chemical treatment on the surface is called superficial, or commonly known as "sprayed" or "dipped." The chemical is applied as a solution, in water or some other solvent which dries to form a layer on the foliage.

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The second way is to incorporate the chemical earlier in the manufacturing stage, usually the polymer from which the plastic parts are created. This is called **inherently** fire retarded and because it is throughout the product, rather than just on the surface, is more reliable.

Superficial treatments wear off over time, so must be recoated. Depending on where they are this can be anything between 3 and 6 monthly intervals. Some leave a tacky residue which collects dust and although still fire retarded, the dust then becomes a hazard. If it gets cleaned, the treatment will be cleaned off. So over-enthusiastic cleaners can create a fire hazard. If the foliage is a smooth plastic type, that is with no woven fabric, such as used in some topiary styles, it is highly unlikely that any spray or dipped treatment will be effective at all.

Inherently fire retarded foliage has none of these problems. From the day it is installed to the day it's taken out, it will meet it's original fire rating. It's a false economy not to use it, even though it is more expensive. (If you want the maths, give us a call.) Cleaning presents no problems, no matter how often it happens, it will still be fire retarded.

And from under our bushel...

Wherever we can, we use inherently fire retarded foliage. If we can't, we always say so. That means you know exactly what you're getting from us.

Now here's a thought

My nephew wanted to do a joint
degree in Geology and Astrophysics.

He was advised against it -they said
he'd find himself between rock and
hard space

and finally...

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Have a Happy & Prosperous 2012

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