

Lighting & Electrical

- All lights should have the UL approval label.
- Use a sturdy ladder on a solid surface. Use the buddy system when hanging lights or decorations.
- Inspect each string of lights (*old & new*) for:
 1. broken or cracked sockets.
 2. frayed or bare wires.
 3. loose connections.
 4. loose or missing bulbs.
- Throw out or repair any damaged sets.
- Unplug lights before replacing any bulbs. Read the packaging for proper wattage and voltage.
- Never connect more than 3 strings of lights together or on an extension cord.
- Do not staple or nail through electrical cords. It could cause a shock or fire.
- Never use extension cords under carpets, across doorways, or pinched behind furniture.
- Never overload outlets.
- Protect all electrical connections (*inside and out*) from water.
- Metal tinsel can cause a short or a fire if touching electrical lights or wiring and can be dangerous if swallowed by children or pets.
- Unplug all Christmas lights when you leave or go to bed. Never pull on the cord to unplug.
- Remove outdoor lighting when the season is over. These lights are not designed for prolonged exposure to the elements.
- Never decorate a tree with real candles.



Indoor lights should be used indoors; outdoor lights - outdoors.

Around the House

- Never burn wrapping paper or Christmas trees in a fireplace. They burn too quickly and can create a chemical buildup inside the chimney or throw off sparks that cause a fire.
- Remove all stockings, decorations, and greens in front of the fireplace and from the mantle before starting a fire.
- Keep toxic fire salts away from children and pets.
- Only use candles in non-tip holders away from greenery, curtains, and other flammable items.
- Extinguish candles when leaving a room.



1/2 of all fire-related deaths occur during the winter months when fireplaces & other heating systems are in use.

Kids and the Holidays

- All electrical toys should be UL approved and never used near water.
- When cooking, keep pot handles turned inward and keep hot drinks and food away from the edge of tables and counters.
- Store choking hazards such as hard candies and nuts out of the reach of children.
- Batteries are toxic. Keep them out of the reach of children and pets.
- Keep chocolate out of the reach of pets.
- Poisonous plants such as mistletoe, poinsettias, holly berries, and ivy should be kept up out of the reach of children and pets.
- Provide smokers with large, deep, non-tip ashtrays. Make sure they are emptied often and that the butts are completely out before disposing. Check all furniture and wastebaskets for smoldering cigarettes.
- Alcohol is the #1 cause of many types of accidents around the holiday season. Never drink and drive.



Be sure any home you visit is childproof, too.

Holiday Safety

Celebrate with safety.



National Fire Safety Council, Inc.

Celebrate Safely

The holidays are a special time of year. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, or New Year's, there is always potential for fire and accidents.

Take all of the usual fire safety precautions. Check all smoke alarms. Install carbon monoxide detectors. Have chimneys, fireplaces, and central heating units inspected by professionals. Develop a Home Fire Escape Plan and practice it with your family. Make sure escape routes are not blocked.

Common sense can keep a celebration from turning into a tragedy.

- About 1/6 of home fires started by candles occur in December.
- 6,200 people are treated for injuries related to holiday decorations and Christmas trees.
- Holiday lights cause 510 fires each year and Christmas trees are involved in 400 fires.

NEVER leave children unattended where holiday hazards are present, particularly in homes that are unfamiliar.

Keep all trees and greenery away from heat sources.

Artificial Trees are cleaner and safer.

- Make sure it is fire retardant. (*Not as likely to burn.*)
- Make sure it has a UL label of approval.

Metal Trees are not fire hazards unless improperly used.

- ONLY illuminate with flood lights, never electric lights which can cause a severe shock, start a fire, or be damaged by the sharp metal edges of the tree.
- Place the flood lights up out of the reach of children and away from anything that can burn.

Living Trees purchased from landscape nurseries are intended to be replanted and come wrapped in burlap to protect the roots.

- While outdoors, keep it in a tub of water.
- Water daily when moved indoors.
- Keep watered when taken back outdoors until planted in the Spring.

Choosing the Perfect Tree

Natural Trees are trees that are cut. The freshest trees are the ones you cut yourself. To avoid a potential fire hazard, choose a fresh tree that:

1. has good color.
2. has needles that are hard to pull from branches.
3. has needles that bend and then break when bent between your thumb and index finger.
4. has sticky resin on the butt of the trunk.
5. does not drop a lot of needles when its trunk is bounced on the ground.

TREE TIP: Laying a tree on concrete or asphalt especially if warm outside could burn the foliage.



Use miniature lights, they don't dry out needles as quickly.

Maintenance

- Keep a real tree outside until you are ready to decorate it.
- Use a stand that is appropriate for your tree.
- Cut 1-2" off the trunk to help absorb water.
- Make sure your tree stand can hold at least 1 gallon of water. Mix in a commercial preservative.
- Check the water level every day. (*A tree should use 1 quart to 1 gallon of water every 1-2 days.*)



Place trees out of traffic areas. Never block doorways or fire exits.

- Secure the tree to the wall or ceiling with wire or string to keep it from tipping.
- When the needles start to fall off in large quantities, it is a fire hazard. Dispose of it immediately by putting it in a "tree bag" (*available at most grocery and hardware stores*) and leave it for pickup with your local service.

Trimming

- Breakable ornaments or those with small parts and metal hooks should be placed out of reach.
- Older ornaments which may be decorated with lead paint are a hazard to children and pets.
- Only decorate with flame-resistant materials.
- Avoid decorations that resemble candy or food that could be tempting to a child.



Keep all metal ornaments away from electrical sources.

- Keep "bubbling" lights out of reach. They contain hazardous chemicals if swallowed.
- Only use non-toxic spray "snow" in well-ventilated areas. Follow instructions closely.
- Wear gloves when working with spun glass "angel hair" to keep from irritating the eyes and skin. Use away from children and pets.