



## HOLIDAY SEASONAL SAFETY



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While decorating for the holidays is a festive way to embrace the season, exercising caution is a must. Electronically lit decorations and cold weather can put heavy demands on heating equipment and electrical output. In fact, each year U.S. fire departments respond to an estimated 25,900 home electrical fires.<sup>1</sup> Eleven percent of home candle fires are caused by decorations in December alone, compared to four percent the rest of the year.<sup>2</sup> Christmas trees can be additional holiday hazards. Based on data from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), one of every 40 reported home fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in a death.<sup>2</sup>

### Prevention Tips

To make sure your friends and family enjoy a safe holiday season, keep your home in good shape with these safety tips:

- ▶ When decorating, try to only use flame-retardant decorations.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Wrapping paper can ignite quickly so do not put or use in fireplace.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Consider using battery operated candles. Some even have imitation flames!<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Christmas trees get dry quickly and are very flammable, so water them daily.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ If you are using an artificial tree, make sure it is fire resistant.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Cords take a lot of wear and tear so check for cracks or frayed insulation and do not try to repair them yourself, get them replaced.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Check the lights before decorating – look for loose sockets or broken wires.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Heed the warnings on ladders, they're labeled for a reason!<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Electrical fire safety outreach materials. United States Fire Administration (USFA). <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/electrical.html>. Last reviewed April 2015. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>2</sup>Holiday, candle, and Christmas tree safety outreach materials. United States Fire Administration (USFA). <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/holiday.html>. Last reviewed May 2015. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>3</sup>Holiday Fire Safety. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfuS06cMPYM>. Published May 2013. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>4</sup>“Deck the Halls” Safely: CPSC Estimates More Than 15,000 Holiday Decorating Injuries During November and December. United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Newsroom/News-Releases/2014/CPSC-Estimates-More-Than-15000-Holiday-Decorating-Injuries-During-November-and-December/>. Published December 2013. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>5</sup>Electrical Fire Safety. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=tbPKVMpEA6M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=tbPKVMpEA6M). Published December 2013. Accessed July 2015.

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