



Holiday Safety

The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, home decorating, entertaining, and an increased risk of fire due to heating equipment. The NFPA reports that during 2003-2007, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 250 home fires which started with Christmas trees per year. These fires caused an average of 14 deaths, 26 injuries, and \$13.8 million in direct property damage annually. Fire prevention is important year round, but it is especially important to follow these simple tips during the winter months to ensure that your holiday season is filled with joy and happiness.

Holiday decorating

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini light sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.



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Holiday Entertaining

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles and kitchen while cooking.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.



For More Information

www.nfpa.org
www.holidaysafety.org

