



Decorating Your Home for the Holidays

The holiday season is a time for celebration. However, each year fires injure 2,600 people in the United States and cause more than \$930 million in damage.

As people decorate their homes with trees, wreaths, electric lights and candles, there are important steps to remember to ensure a safe and happy holiday.

Holiday Christmas Trees

- If you are going to use a live Christmas tree in your home, there are several things to note:
 - When you select your tree, the needles should be fresh, green and hard to pull off a branch. If needles fall off easily, the tree is drying out and can pose a fire hazard.
 - Locate the tree in your home carefully. Do not put the tree near any source of heat, such as a fireplace or vent. This can cause the tree to dry more quickly and pose a fire hazard.
 - Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
 - Use a large sturdy tree stand, so children can't pull the tree down.
 - Cut the branches on the bottom of the tree, so they don't poke children in the eye.
- Check electric lights for frayed wires, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive wear before use.
- Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Do not leave electric lights unattended.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.

Gift and Home Decorations

- All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant. They should not be placed near heating vents or fireplaces.
- Do not put wrapping paper in the fireplace, as chemicals can build up in the home and cause an explosion.
- Artificial Christmas trees should be flame retardant.
- Broken ornaments can be a risk for children. Make sure you keep sharp or breakable glass ornaments out of their reach.
- Be sure to keep ribbon away from small children. Any piece seven inches or longer could wrap around a child's neck and accidentally strangle him or her.

Candles

- Do not leave candles unattended.
- Use stable candle holders that are out of reach of children.
- Do not put lit candles on a tree.

Fire Prevention Tips

Visit the Web site of the U.S. Fire Administration for additional fire prevention tips (www.usfa.fema.gov).

Safety Information

Visit the Web site of Safe Kids USA (www.usa.safekids.org) for more information about accidental injury prevention in children 0-14, safety tips, fact sheets and more. Or contact Chrissy Cianflone, Home and Fire Safety Manager, Safe Kids Worldwide on 202-662-0625 or ccianflone@safekids.org.