

Army *Safety* Gram

Leading on the Edge for Safety *Excellence*

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Holiday Safety

As the holidays draw near, decorative lighting and special effects become important components of the festive season. Christmas trees, in particular, are a traditional part of the season. And although they are special, trees pose a definite safety risk.

If you're using a natural tree this year reduce the risk of a tree fire by taking the following precautions.

- ◆ Choose a freshly cut green tree, not one that has dried out through weeks of storage. If you are buying one from a tree lot, tap the trunk on the ground; if several needles fall off, it's too dry. Needles that bend and are not easily pulled off indicate a fresh tree. Consider a potted Christmas tree so you can plant it in your yard once the holidays are over.
- ◆ Before setting it up, cut two inches diagonally off the butt. The tree will draw water more easily from a fresh cut.
- ◆ Stand the tree in a tub or bucket of water and keep the tree trunk immersed to prevent the tree from drying out.
- ◆ Select a safe location for the tree, away from drapes and curtains and from drying and heating sources such as registers, radiators, and television sets. Don't block doors or windows which might be used to escape in an emergency and never put a tree near a fireplace!
- ◆ Use a tree-stand with widespread legs for better balance and a large water reserve in which to immerse the tree butt. Check the water level every day and add more as required.
- ◆ Check your Christmas lights for defects. Spread them out on a non-flammable surface before installing them. Make sure there are no broken bulbs, all electrical cords are free of cuts or frays and the plugs are in good condition.
- ◆ Extension cords should never be placed under carpets or where they could be a tripping hazard.
- ◆ Don't leave the Christmas tree lights on if there is no one in the room.
- ◆ If the tree begins to lose an excessive amount of needles, remove it immediately.
- ◆ Never burn your tree in the fireplace!



Holiday lights and decorations brighten the darkest days of winter, but they also present hazards, especially to young children.

Help keep youngsters safe by following these reminders:

- ◆ Inspect your home after decorating to locate any hazards of fire, electric shock or falls.
- ◆ When visiting relatives or attending community events, check the surroundings for hazards and help correct them to protect your children and others.
- ◆ Put candles, cords, and breakable ornaments out of reach.
- ◆ Instruct children that lights and decorations are for viewing, not touching.

Above all, supervise children closely. Don't let the distractions of company keep you from watching them.

These safety tips will help keep your Christmas a joyous occasion for everyone!

