

*Although the winter holiday season is one of the most fun times of the year, it is also one of the busiest times for house fires. Below are some ideas to keep your holiday season safer.*

- Keep trees away from all sources of heat (heaters, heat vents, candles, stoves, etc.)
- Make sure all decoration lights are labeled with an approved testing laboratory.
- If using lights, check for frayed cords and follow manufacturer's recommendations for stringing more than one set.
- Turn off decorative lights when leaving the area or going to bed.
- Consider an artificial tree as they are much safer and cleaner.
- When purchasing a real tree, cut 1" off the base at a 45 degree angle to help absorb water. A 6' tree will use 1 gallon of water every 2 days. Check the water level each day.
  
- Use miniature lights, which have cool burning bulbs, on indoor trees.
- NEVER burn a real tree in the fireplace as it can cause a chimney fire.
- With outdoor decorating, use lights and extension cords approved for outside. Keep all connectors above ground and out of puddles and snow.
- Be especially careful with the use of candles during the holiday season. Keep candles away from all decoration and gifts. Remember to extinguish all candles when leaving the area or before going to bed.
- After parties, check around and under couches and chair cushions for smoldering cigarettes. Provide a lot of ashtrays.
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby and easily accessible.

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