

HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY



Each year fires during the holiday season claim the lives of over 400 Americans, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damages. To avoid being one of these statistics make sure you invite common sense to your holiday gatherings.

CHRISTMAS TREES

If you're using a live Christmas tree, make sure you buy one that has been freshly cut. Also, check it daily to make sure it stays watered. If needles start dropping in mass quantities dispose of the tree immediately. In addition, never place a live tree by a heat source (heat vent, fire place, etc.); not only can it catch on fire it will also cause the tree to dry out quicker.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Holiday lights are responsible for more than 500 fires every year. About half of those are caused by sets of lights with cracked, worn, or faulty wiring—lights that should've been thrown out years ago. Prior to using your lights inspect them every year looking for missing insulation, frayed wires, and broken bulbs. Never connect more than 3 sets of lights together unless the directions say that it's okay. Use power strips instead of extension cords and turn off your lights when you go to bed or leave home. The newer LED lights are a much better option than traditional lights; not only do they use less energy they also give off very little heat.

CANDLES

If at all possible, avoid using lit candles in your decorating. If you must use them make sure they are in sturdy holders and placed where children and pets can't get to them. Most importantly, make sure all candles are extinguished before you leave the house or go to bed at night. Just like Christmas lights, there are now LED candles. These battery-operated candles flicker and even release scent like a regular candle without being a fire hazard.

PARTIES

Holiday gatherings present their own set of hazards. The greatest cause for concern is smoking. Provide large, deep ashtrays for your guests and wet the ashes before disposing of them. When cooking anything on the stovetop stay in the kitchen and watch it. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires. Impaired judgment due to alcohol at parties only increases the likelihood of a fire or other preventable accidents. Stay sober and alert to ensure the safety of all of your guests.

Finally, as in every season, make sure your smoke detectors are in working order and observe the fire safe practices that you use all year long.

**The holidays are a time of happiness, family, and friends.
Don't have them spoiled by an unnecessary fire.**

