

Holiday Safety

The Facts:

- Holiday fires kill over 400 Americans every year and cause more than \$990 million in damage.
- Approximately 1.9 million injuries occur as a result of falls each holiday season.
- During each of the 2000, 2001, and 2002 holiday seasons, about 5,800 people were treated in the emergency room for decorating-related falls.

Reduce your risk of injury this season with safety tips on the following topics:

Lights/Electrical

- Check all tree lights (even new ones) for frayed wires or loose connections.
- Make sure lights displayed outdoors are specifically for outdoor use. The packaging should indicate this, but you can also tell by the holographic UL marks: green means indoor use only and red means either indoor or outdoor use.
- Do not use tacks or nails to hang lights; use hooks or insulated staples.

- Plug outdoor electrical decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid getting shocked.
- Do not overload extension cords and unplug when not in use.
- Always turn off all lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

Candles

- Place candles where they can't easily get knocked over, especially by pets and children.
- Keep candles at least three feet away from flammable materials.
- Blow all candles out any time you leave the room and before going to bed.
- Never use lit candles on a Christmas tree.

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- Store candles, lighters, and matches in a locked cabinet away from children.
- Use battery-operated candles whenever possible.

Decorations

- Only use non-flammable decorations to trim your tree.
- With children in the home, avoid sharp or breakable decorations and those that resemble candy or food. Also, keep small removable parts out of their reach to prevent choking.
- Wear gloves when decorating with "angel hair." This will help to prevent eye and skin irritation.
- Carefully use artificial snow sprays... to avoid lung irritation.

Ladders

- Place ladders on level ground, open them completely, and make sure locks are engaged.

- Use the 4-to-1 rule for extension ladders: for every 4 feet of distance between the ground and the upper point of contact (such as the wall or roof), move the base of the ladder out 1 foot.
- Always wear slip-resistant shoes and face the ladder when climbing. Rubber soles are preferable.
- Stay centered on ladder: if belt buckle passes beyond ladder railing, you are at higher risk of falling.
- Always stand at or below the highest safe standing level on a ladder. For a stepladder, this is the second rung from the top. For an extension ladder, this is the fourth rung from the top.



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