

# **Festivity Safety Tips**

Holidays are always a time for celebration. Whether it is the 4th of July, Thanksgiving, Labor Day or Christmas. This is a time for more cooking, entertaining with friends and family and home decorating. Unfortunately, also a time for bigger risks of fire and home accidents. Take a look at the following tips to help you have a safer enjoyable holiday no matter when time of year it is.

## **Lights**

After you have had your lights packed away for a year, take a look at them to make sure they are not frayed or had any nails driven through them. Make sure all the bulbs work and if you are hanging them outside. Make sure they are rated for outdoor use.

Have lights on a timer. Don't leave the house or go to bed and leave lights on. They could short out and start a fire.

Due to weather possibilities, plug your outdoor lights into gfi protected outlets to avoid possible shock.

Use appropriate light string holder attachments provided by manufacturers. Not nails, tacks or staples.

## **Holiday cooking and/or entertaining**

Let guests know where exits are for a quick exit in case of an emergency.

It is easy to get distracted while cooking for a bunch of guests. Taking your eye off cooking whether indoors or outdoors is an easy way to start a fire. One of the leading causes of fires each year is losing track of your cooking while talking and visiting.

With young kids around, remember to keep starters and matches up high and out of reach. For your smoking guests, keep plenty of ash trays around and it never hurts to run an ashtray through a quick snip of water before throwing in the trash.

## **Christmas Decorations**

If you have small children, try to use plastic or paper decorations on your tree and around the house to avoid breakage of sharp glass objects.

Avoid using candles anywhere near the tree or greenery. Keep candles and their wax contained in a tray.

Candles are a huge contributing factor to holiday emergencies.

A lot of decorations these days are marked flame resistant or non-combustible. Try using these items whenever you can.

## **Christmas trees**

If you are using a live tree in your home, make sure you keep the water stand full of water. A dry tree is a fire waiting to happen. A fresh live tree will not be shedding its needles.

When you purchase your tree, if it is without a stand already, cut off a small portion of the trunk to get to new wood. This process makes it easier for the tree to absorb the water you are keeping in its base.

Don't place your tree too close to a fireplace or doorways. Near a fireplace hastens the drying out process and then is more apt to catch on fire. Too near a doorway, leaves the possibility

**for getting knocked over.**

**If you are purchasing an artificial tree, check for a "fire resistant" label or tag.**

#### **Travel Children and Pets**

**If you plan on traveling on any holiday weekend, use your alarm system.**

**If you have a neighbor that doesn't mind keeping an eye on your house and picking up newspapers for you.**

**Don't discuss your travel plans on social media or in an area where strangers could over hear your conversations.**

**Poinsettias can be poisonous if ingested. Keep them safe from pets and children.**

**Tinsel is also a hazard if swallowed.**