



**D**ecorating a home with lights during the holidays is a tradition for many families. Unfortunately, many home electrical fires occur during the holidays because of lights and extension cords.

Keep your holidays happy and safe by remembering the rules of electrical safety and taking these extra precautions:

- Do check for cracked or loose sockets and connections, exposed wires, and frayed, broken or scorched insulation before plugging in any lights — old or new. Then put the lights on a nonflammable surface and plug them in for 10 - 15 minutes to check for melting, smoking or overheating. Throw away any strings showing flaws.
- Do make sure your lights are safety certified. Look for a label that says “Underwriters Laboratories Approved” or “UL Listed.”
- Do protect small children and pets by using plastic safety covers on all unused outlets and keeping cords out of sight and reach. A cord as short as 12 inches can strangle a child.
- Do water your “real” Christmas tree every day, and keep light strings from coming into direct contact with branches. If you have an artificial tree, make sure it’s fire retardant.
- Do make sure the lights and extension cords you use outside are certified for outdoor use and are plugged into a ground fault circuit interrupter outlet.



- Do keep decorations and ladders away from overhead electrical lights and power lines.
- Do follow the manufacturer's guidelines on how many strings of lights can be safely connected together.
- Don't leave lights on while you're sleeping or away from home. If you tend to forget, use a timer.
- Don't plug more than three light strings into an extension cord.
- Don't use metal staples or nails as fasteners for lights. This can damage the protective insulation covering the wires.
- Don't run extension cords across sidewalks or driveways.

*Have a safe,  
happy holiday!*

