

Holiday and Christmas Tree Fire Safety

Decorating homes and businesses is a long-standing tradition around the holiday season. Unfortunately, these same decorations may increase your chances of fire.

Following a few simple fire safety tips can keep electric lights, candles and the ever popular Christmas tree from creating a tragedy.

- Don't put your live Christmas tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks.
- Place trees away from heat sources, including fireplaces or heat vents. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks.
- Keep the live tree stand filled with water at all times.
- Use only nonflammable decorations.
- Don't link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it's safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet.
- Avoid using lit candles; consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles
- Ensure that Christmas trees and other holiday decorations don't block an exit way.

For more tips on how to prevent a holiday fire and what to do in case a fire starts in your home, visit the U.S. Fire Administration's website at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/>

"Focus on Fire Safety from the U.S. Fire Administration"