

Why Trust Anyone Else?



Stay Safe When Lighting Up The Holidays



The holiday season is here and that means it's time to decorate. If you plan on putting on outdoor lights, using candles, or having a live tree please observe the following safety tips:

Light Strings



- ✓ Use only lighting sets and extensions that carry the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM) label. If you are stringing lights up outside make sure to use lights specifically marked for "Outdoor Use" and use extension cords marked for outdoor use. Ideally outdoor lights should be plugged into a GFCI outlet. You can purchase a GFCI protected extension cord from most hardware and home center stores.
- ✓ Follow manufacturer's recommendations on the number of light strings that can be strung together.
- ✓ Don't use frayed or damaged light strings. Also don't hang strings by nails, thumb tacks or staples. Instead use hooks or clips specifically designed for hanging light strings.
- ✓ When using an extension cord connect light strings to the cord before plugging the cord into an outlet.

Candles



- ✓ Check candles often to make sure they don't burn down too far or drip hot wax.
- ✓ Prevent small children from going near candles. Never leave children in a room with lit candles, Oh and by the way don't trust some teenagers with candles (speaking from experience here).
- ✓ Place candles in sturdy, non-combustible holders that will not tip.
- ✓ Keep candles away from decorations, drapes, and other combustible materials.

Live Christmas Trees



- ✓ Water your tree daily!! A fresh tree containing adequate moisture will not support a flame.
- ✓ Ideally use a tree stand that holds one gallon of water. A tree can absorb up to a gallon of water within its first 24 hours.
- ✓ Place tree away from fireplaces, radiators, heater vents, and other heat sources that could dry out the tree.
- ✓ If the water dries out of your tree holder the tree can develop a "sap plug" over the base of the tree and will no longer drink water. The tree will dry out quickly and become a fire hazard. If you notice the water remains at the same level, drain the water from the holder (a siphon from a home store works well) and drill some holes into the trunk, just enough to get to fresh wood, below the water level. It is best to remove the tree and cut the base but this fix will work to help prolong the tree life.
- ✓ Do not use additives in water, including floral preservatives, molasses, sugar, bleach, soft drinks, aspirin, honey, or other concoctions. Do not use chemicals in the stand to prevent evaporation. Water moves into the trunk at the lower cut end, and eventually evaporates (transpires) from the foliage. Evaporation from the surface of water in the stand is negligible, compared to the loss from transpiration. Do not apply film-forming anti-transpirants. The products supposedly block the evaporation of water from the surface of foliage, but in reality have little benefit. Clean water is the only requirement to maintain freshness.

By following these suggestions, you can help make the holidays safer and happier for everyone!!

Honest Home Inspection cares about the safety of you and your family. That is why we have provided this material on Holiday Safety. Share it with the people who share your home. Be Safe!!

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