
Emergency Preparedness Pointers



Holiday Safety Tips



The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, lots of parties, and the risk of fire. In recent years, approximately 620 fires per year have been started by ignition of Christmas trees in the United States causing an average of 36 deaths, 112 injuries, and \$15 million in property damage. Follow these preparedness tips to help keep your family safe during the holidays.

Holiday Lighting

- ❖ Take care when burning candles. Be sure they are kept away from decorations or other combustible materials.
- ❖ Don't leave children unattended in a room with lit candles, and always keep candles, as well as matches and lighters, up high, out of reach of children.
- ❖ Don't display lighted candles in windows or near exits in case you need these to escape.
- ❖ Never use candles to decorate a Christmas tree!
- ❖ When decorating with lights, be sure to purchase only those labeled by a testing laboratory.
- ❖ Check for frayed or damaged cords and replace any if you find them.
- ❖ For outside decorations, use only those lights labeled for outdoor use.
- ❖ Don't overload electrical outlets, and always unplug all lights before leaving home or going to sleep.



Holiday Parties

- ❖ Decorate only with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.
- ❖ Provide guests with large, deep ashtrays and check them frequently.
- ❖ After the party, check inside and under upholstery and in trash cans for cigarettes that may be smoldering.
- ❖ Don't serve alcohol without food. Serve plenty of filling snacks.



Kitchen Fire Safety

- ❖ Wear tight-fitting clothes when cooking; loose clothes can be ignited by hot burners.
- ❖ Never leave the kitchen when something is cooking on the stove and always turn handles in.
- ❖ Don't store items on the stove top – they could easily catch fire.
- ❖ Keep kitchen appliances clean and in good condition, and turn them off after use.
- ❖ Don't overload electrical outlets, and don't use appliances with frayed or cracked wires.
- ❖ Don't use electrical appliances in or near water.

Other Holiday Tips

- ❖ Choose a fresh Christmas tree. Cut at least ½ inch from the end of the tree for maximum water absorption.
- ❖ Put tree in a stand that will hold a minimum of one gallon of water.
- ❖ Place tree well away from heat sources and exits, and water daily.
- ❖ If you purchase an artificial tree, be sure that it is labeled as fire-retardant.
- ❖ All decorative trim for your Christmas tree should be made of flame resistant material or be treated with a flame retardant product.
- ❖ If you plan to hang stockings on your fireplace, don't burn fires in it.
- ❖ Choose holiday gifts wisely, passing up those that could be highly flammable.

