

# HOLIDAY HINTS

## Ten Tips For A Safer Season

(NAPSA)—While treasured holiday customs such as decorating, baking and entertaining are all part of what makes the holiday season a cherished time for family and friends, they can increase the risks for home fires and serious injuries—but not if you put safety at the top of your holiday “to-do” list with these tips:

- Check that electrical decorations have a certification label from a nationally recognized testing laboratory, which indicates that they have been tested for safety.

- Inspect all electrical decorations for damage before use. Cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire.

- Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights together. These lights require a surprising amount of energy and can overload the electrical circuit. LED lights use less power, letting you safely connect more strings.

- Do not overload electrical outlets. Overloaded outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday fires.

- Protect cords from damage. Power and extension cords should never be pinched in doors, windows or under heavy furniture. Do not place cords under carpets or rugs, and never nail or staple them to the wall or baseboard.

- Check for freshness when purchasing a live Christmas tree and keep your tree fresh by watering it daily. Dry trees are a serious fire hazard.



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**Turn off, unplug and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or leaving the house.**

- Use battery-operated candles instead of traditional candles. Candles are responsible for 45 percent of fires involving holiday decorations.

- Keep combustibles, including presents, stockings and the Christmas tree, at least three feet from heat sources such as the fireplace or space heater. Heat sources that are too close to decorations are a factor in 48 percent of home holiday decoration fires.

- Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking. Unattended cooking equipment is the leading cause of home cooking fires.

- Turn off, unplug and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or leaving the house. Half of all home fire deaths occur between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

### Learn More

For further safety tips and tactics, visit the experts at the Electrical Safety Foundation International online at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org) or call (703) 841-3229.