



HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS FROM THE INSIDE OUT!

The next best thing than Thanksgiving is the day after when we start preparing for the winter holidays. This week, we will start from the outside and work our way in.

One of the most common causes of holiday-time house fires results from outdoor bulbs being too close to gutters filled with dried out leaves. Make sure that the strings of lights you are using outside have built-in fuses on the lines.

Check the actual plug. Make sure you are using lights designated for outdoor use only. Use lights and electric equipment that has been tested and verified by a reliable testing laboratory. If you have a string of lights with a blown bulb, be sure to replace it with a bulb of the exact same wattage.

Never tap into your home's feeder line to power your outdoor holiday lights or hang decorations on the line. Avoid using nails, tacks, or metal staples to secure your outdoor lights. Use insulated hooks. Be sure your lights are strung tightly to avoid damage from the wind.

Use only outdoor rated extension cords. Connect no more than three strings of lights to a single extension cord. All plugs should be plugged into a GFCI protected outlet when used outside.

Watch for overhead wires when using a ladder. When climbing a ladder, always use caution, preferably having someone secure the ladder for you. Do not place the ladder in damp or muddy areas. Make sure you have a safe and solid foundation before climbing.

INDOOR SAFETY TIPS

Now that the outdoor decorations are in place, let us look at a few indoor safety tips.

When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness.

When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water.

Do not block doorways. Use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory.

Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, loose connections, and throw out damaged sets. Always replace burned-out bulbs promptly with the same wattage bulbs. Use no more than three standard size sets of lights per single extension cord.

Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.

Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.

In homes with small children, take special care to avoid sharp, weighted, or breakable decorations.

Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children who could swallow or inhale small pieces and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.

Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!