

agent insight

Fire Safety Tips

As joyful as the Holiday Season can be, too often we hear of a preventable tragedy in the home. Some, but not all, are associated with holiday decorations.

Fires are the number one threat to homes, yet they can almost always be avoided if you follow the right safety tips.

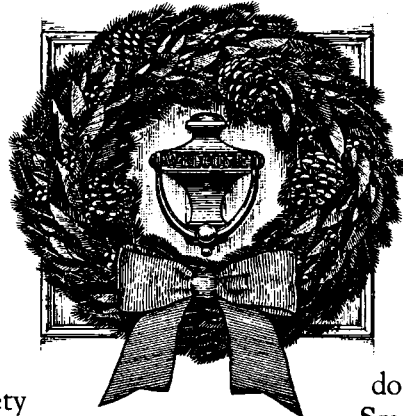
Avoiding holiday hazards:

- Christmas trees should not be sprayed with any type of lacquer to keep needles from falling.
- Decorative lights should be checked to make sure there are no missing bulbs or loose wires.
- Keep lights away from combustible materials and turn them off at night or when you leave the house.
- Avoid using combustible decorations, such as those made of paper.
- Never use real candles to decorate a tree. When candles are used, keep them away from flammable materials, such as draperies, and out of the reach of children.

Here are some additional fire safety tips for around the house.

When using heating equipment:

- Keep things that can burn away from space and portable heaters.
- Hire a certified chimney sweep to clean and inspect the chimney regularly.
- Have a professional inspect heating equipment for proper design, maintenance, installation and operation.
- Install and fill both liquid- and gas-fueled heaters according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Never leave auxiliary heating equipment unattended.



When using cooking and electrical appliances:

- Don't overload wall outlets.
- Be sure to use properly rated fuses for each circuit.
- Don't use frayed electrical cords.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs or furniture.

When in the kitchen:

- Keep the stove clean and free of grease.
- Keep the handles of pots and pans turned inward.
- Keep all flammable material (including shirt sleeves) away from burners.
- Keep a fire extinguisher rated for grease fires nearby.
- Never store flammable liquids in the kitchen.
- Never leave cooking unattended.

More than 90 percent of fire deaths each year are a result of **careless smoking**. Don't allow smoking in your home. If you do, have plenty of ashtrays on hand.

Smoke detectors are also a must for your home. Install at least one smoke detector on each floor and one near each bedroom area.

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