

Take safety home for the holidays

December 2022



Figure 1. Holidays are celebrated around the world

Bodhi Day, Boxing Day, Christmas, Gita Jayanti, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, New Year, and Ōmisoka are some of the many holidays that are celebrated at the end of the calendar year. Often, employees take vacation time to spend them with their families; holidays may involve exchanging gifts with family & friends.

As the holidays approach, we can become very busy with preparations – buying gifts, cooking, cleaning and decorating. It is important not to let the excitement of the holidays overtake the safety of our family, friends and homes.

The risk of house fires increases during the holidays



Don't let this



Become this

Did You Know?

- The National Fire Protection Association reports more than 770 home fires are caused by holiday decorations every year.
- Electrical wiring or lighting equipment was involved in almost half of home holiday tree fires. Nearly 20% of holiday tree fires were started by decorative lights.

(ref. <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Seasonal-fire-causes/Winter-holidays>)

- Many holiday traditions involve candles. Candle fires peak in December and January with 11% of candle fires in each of these months.
- Some holiday traditions have special decorations that are only used then. The condition of the decorations can degrade during storage.
- Installing decorations can require the use of extension cords or multiple wall outlet adapters. Extra cords can be an electrical and a trip hazard.
- Fireworks are also a part of some holiday celebrations. Use extreme care with them. They are very dangerous!

What Can You Do?

- Use lights that are properly rated for indoor or outdoor use.
- Inspect all wiring used for holiday decorating and avoid having too many things plugged into a single source. Replace any decorations with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Take extra care when using candles for decoration or symbolic purposes. Battery powered candles avoid potential ignition sources
- Water your live holiday tree every day. Trees too close to a heat source cause one in every four winter fires.
- Blow out lit candles and turn off all light strings and decorations when leaving the room or going to bed.
- If you or a neighbor are using fireworks, watch for possible fires. Be prepared with a water hose or extinguisher.

Safety is the best gift for the holidays.