

# Holiday Decorating Safety Tips



Erie Insurance wishes you and your family a wonderful holiday season—and a safe one. So, as you enjoy the holidays, please keep these safety tips in mind:

## Trees

- If you choose to use an artificial tree, make sure it's fire-resistant.
- For real trees, freshness is key. Look for a tree with a sticky resin trunk and needles that bend instead of break.
- Water it daily.
- Keep your tree at least three feet away from direct heat sources (i.e., fireplace, radiator).

## Trimnings

- All trimmings should be made of non-combustible or flame-resistant material.
- Keep decorations with small removable parts out of the reach of children.

## Lights and extension cords

- Only use lights that have been safety tested by an independent testing lab (look for the label of approval on the box).
- Whether they're new or old, check each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires or loose connections.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely.

- Don't overload extension cords. Use no more than three sets of lights per cord unless the instructions say otherwise.
- Never run cords under carpets or rugs.

## Candles

- Place candles within sight and where they cannot be knocked down or blown over.
- Always use non-flammable holders and keep burning candles away from drafts and vents.
- Keep candles away from other decorations.
- Store matches, lighters and candles out of the reach of children.
- Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or before going to sleep.

## Fireplace

- Use a sturdy screen in front of the fireplace to protect against sparks.
- Place stockings and other trimmings away from the direct heat of the fireplace.
- Don't burn gift wrap.
- Have your fireplace inspected and cleaned annually by a professional, certified chimney sweep.
- Don't use gasoline, kerosene or lighter fluid to start a fire.
- Never leave a fire unattended.

This information is presented as a public service of Erie Insurance and your local ERIE Agent.



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