



## POST-HOLIDAY SAFETY

### Wrap Up the Holidays Safely

Even after the holiday season has come and gone, many indoor and outdoor decorations remain in use.

Holiday decorations are meant for temporary use only. Keeping decorations up for several months leaves wires exposed to the elements, and can shorten product life and lead to unsafe material conditions.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) reminds everyone to eliminate potential electrical hazards by packing and storing decorations properly so that they are safe for use next year.

### Seasonal Reminders

- During the first week of January, take down, inspect, and store all decorations for next season.
- Look for and discard broken or faulty lights.
- Make sure that electrical cords are in good condition, and wire insulation is not frayed or cracked.
- Separate and label indoor and outdoor decorations.
- Inspect ladders for loose or missing screws, hinges, bolts, and nuts.
- Yanking or tugging on electrical cords when unplugging them can cause damage to the cord.
- Store decorations away from children, pets, and water.
- Send warranty and product registration forms to manufacturers in order to be notified promptly in the event of a product recall.

### Facts & Statistics

- Roughly 64 percent of homeowners expect to take their decorations down during the first half of January.
- Nearly 156,000 fires occur during the winter holiday season, causing 630 deaths, 2,600 injuries, and approximately \$936 million in property damage. (Source: *United States Fire Administration*)
- Approximately 5,000 people visit the emergency room each holiday season due to indoor and outdoor electrical decoration mishaps. (Source: *United States Consumer Product Safety Commission*)
- Each year, there are more than 200 fatalities and injuries resulting from fire on December 31 and January 1 alone.
- Thirteen percent of all home fires attributed to Christmas trees occur during the month of January. (Source: *National Fire Protection Association*)
- Holiday decorations and Christmas trees cause 2,000 fires and more than \$41 million in property damage every year.
- The number of children injured and killed by home fires more than doubles during the winter holiday season.