



Prevent Electrical Fires during the Holiday Season

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Arlington, VA – The holiday season is a time for celebration, but decorative lights and home cooked meals that add to the ambiance also increase the likelihood of home fires and electrical accidents.

“Each year, nearly 130,000 home fires are reported during the month of December, claiming more than 400 lives and causing more than 1,600 injuries,” said Brett Brenner, president of the Electrical Safety Foundation International. “An increase in indoor activities combined with shopping, entertaining, and cooking for family and friends can cause many consumers to forget basic home safety.”

ESFI recommends following these tips to prevent electrical fires during the holiday season:

- Never leave a stove or toaster oven unattended.
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires in December. Never leave a child alone when cooking or when an electrical appliance is within reach.
- With greater activity comes increased energy use. Be careful not to overburden your electrical system by running clothes dryers, space heaters, and other high-energy appliances at the same time.
- Flickering lights, tripped circuit breakers, and blown fuses are warning signs that your home’s electrical outlets may be overloaded.
- Inspect your electrical products. Look for cracked or frayed appliance cords, exposed wires, and loose connections.
- Use only non-flammable decorations that are placed away from heating vents, and avoid using candles.
- When decorating, do not staple or nail through light strings or cords. Maintain holiday lights, and avoid overloading outlets.
- Confirm that there are working smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers on each floor of your home.
- Finally, always turn off and unplug holiday decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

For more holiday safety tips, visit www.holidaysafety.org.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is a 501(c) (3) organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety. ESFI proudly sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns throughout the year to prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. To learn more about ESFI and electrical safety visit www.electrical-safety.org.

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