



ESFI Offers Tips for Wrapping Up the Holidays Safely

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Arlington, VA— Even after the holiday season has come and gone, many indoor and outdoor decorations remain in use. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) encourages consumers to take down, inspect, and store all decorations during the first week of January.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, nearly 156,000 fires occur during the winter holiday season, causing 630 deaths, 2,600 injuries, and approximately \$936 million in property damage. Each year, there are more than 200 fire-related injuries and fatalities on December 31st and January 1st alone.

“Holiday decorations are meant for temporary use,” said ESFI president Brett Brenner. “Keeping your decorations up for extended periods leaves wires unnecessarily exposed to the elements, which can decrease the product’s shelf life and increase the risk of electrical hazards, such as fire, shock, and electrocution.”

ESFI offers the following suggestions for wrapping up after the holidays and ensuring that decorations are removed and stored properly so that they will be safe for use next year:

- Look for and discard broken or faulty lights.
- Ensure 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.
- Avoid yanking or tugging on electrical cords when unplugging them to prevent 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.

Visit www.holidaysafety.org for more tips and tools to help keep you safe during the holiday season.

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. Visit www.electrical-safety.org for additional information about ESFI and electrical safety.

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