

Keep your home safe for the holidays

While decorating for the holidays can be lots of fun, it's important to consider the fire and safety hazards. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), fires occurring during the holiday season claim the lives of more than 400 people, injure 1,650 more and cause more than \$990 million in damage. Here are some simple steps you can take to ensure safe and happy holidays.

- Don't overload electrical outlets. It's easy to get carried away with extension cords and power sticks, and before you know it, every decoration is plugged into one socket. A single outlet shouldn't support more than five plug-ins.
- Avoid using lit candles. If you do choose to use a fragrant burning candle, make sure they're on a stable surface where they can't be easily knocked over. Always blow them out before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Inspect light strands. Check for broken sockets, frayed wires or general wear. Use no more than three linked strands for a single extension cord.
- Don't burn wrapping paper. It's extremely flammable and can result in an intense, flash fire.
- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking for holiday, remember to keep an eye on the range.

This article can be found on NNI's website - go to www.nni.org, click on the 'Neighborhoods' tab, and click on 'Neighborhood Newsletter Article.'

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