

"For safety's sake—do something."

Enjoy a Safe Holiday Season

Deck the halls this season, but keep in mind some ways we can prevent house fires. Decorations like trees, candles, and lights are hallmarks of the holiday season, but they also present fire risks that can quickly turn this festive time of year into a devastating one. In addition, although working alone is not the best option, with the holiday approaching and more people taking time off of work, you may find yourself working alone.

Tree Safety

Each holiday season, fire departments respond to an average of 210 tree fires nationally according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

- Keep your tree at least three feet away from all heat sources (like fireplaces, radiators, and heat vents).
- Choose a sturdy stand so the tree will not tip over.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Once the holiday season is over you should aim to get rid of a real tree as soon as possible.

Candle Safety

December is the peak time of year for candle-related house fires, says the NFPA. In one five-year study, the NFPA found that 52% of decoration-related fires were started by candles.

- Keep lit candles at least 12 inches away from surrounding objects.
- Trim wicks to a quarter of an inch before you light them and only let candles burn for one hour for every inch of diameter, so the wax can melt evenly.
- Never leave lit candles in a room that's unattended.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles and matches. Place them where they cannot be knocked down.

Light Safety

As much as you may want to cover every inch of your house with lights, you may have to scale back depending on your outlets. Check the lights' packaging for the power output and never plug in more than what a power strip or outlet says it can handle.

- Always look for the UL symbol when buying electrical items and pay attention to its color: Green means it's approved for indoor use, and red means it can be used indoors and outdoors.
- Never nail or tack wiring when hanging lights.
- Keep plugs off the ground away from puddles and snow.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.

Working Alone

If you have to head into the office or onto a site when no one else is working:

- Have a plan in case of an emergency.
- Keep your cell phone handy at all times.
- Make sure that someone knows where you are, how long you will be there, and let them know if your plans change.
- If you can, avoid performing tasks that normally require a second person (spotter) like climbing a ladder or heavy lifting.
- USE COMMON SENSE.

Safety Scott says,
"Safety always is
ALWAYS!"