

HOLIDAY ELECTRICAL SAFETY



Safety Gram

DECEMBER
2020

**“TAKE A LOOK AT THE FIVE AND TEN, IT'S
GLISTENING ONCE AGAIN”**

...but are the lights that make the Five and Ten glisten safe?

During this time of holiday celebrations and decorations it is important to keep safety in mind. Unsafe electrical conditions can cause harmful accidents from fires to electrocution. With the increased use of lights and electrical decorations during this time of year there are a few things to keep in mind to keep you and those around you safe.

CHECK ELECTRICAL DECORATIONS BEFORE HANGING THEM UP

Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause serious shock or cause a fire. When working with electrical decorations that may be old or haven't been used for a while, check them like Santa's list...twice. Make sure connections to plugs are good and no wires are bare.

DO NOT OVERLOAD ELECTRICAL SOCKETS OR OUTLETS

Overloaded electrical outlets and faulty wires are a common cause of holiday fires. Avoid overloading outlets and plug only one high-wattage into each outlet at a time. Never plug more than three strings of lights together at a time, this arrangement is very prone to electrical shorts and can be very dangerous. Also, be aware of using extension cords. Extension cords should be used as a temporary extension only,

Safety Committee

The purpose of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department Safety Committee is to help protect researchers, workers, and students in the department.

Please contact us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions about lab safety.

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not on a permanent basis. They can overheat, short out, and cause fires in homes.



KEEP COMBUSTIBLES AT LEAST THREE FEET FROM HEAT SOURCES

Heat sources that are too close to decorations account for over half of home fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Arrange lights and decorations away from heat and light sources to prevent the risk of fires. Another good recommendation is to keep trees fresh and watered. Dried Christmas trees account for at least 200 structure fires in the United States alone. You can hang the stocking from the chimney with care, but make sure they are three feet from the fireplace. Or get flame resistant stockings.

TURN OFF, UNPLUG, AND EXTINGUISH ALL DECORATIONS WHEN GOING TO SLEEP OR LEAVING THE HOUSE

We all appreciate “seeing the soft glow of electric s...your major award, in the window. However, leaving lights and decorations on could pose hazards to you and your house. Not only will leaving them on drive up your electricity bill, but if any accidents were to happen you would not be able to respond. Fires are able to spread very fast, using tinsel and other decorations as fuel, so being there to put them out if they start can save you and your house. Unattended candles are the cause of one in five home candle fires. Half of home fire deaths occur between the hours of 11pm and 7am (NFPA).



PROTECT LIGHTS AND DECORATIONS WHEN PUTTING THEM AWAY

As the season winds down be ready to take down and put decorations away in a safe way. Keep in mind, you’ll likely be the one to take them out next year. Keep cords lightly wrapped to avoid electrical shortages. Put decorations in covered plastic boxes to avoid animals from chewing on them. The better you take care of your decorations the longer they will last and the safer the holidays will be.

For more information about what to look for and consider in holiday decoration shopping, follow this link.

<https://esasafe.com/assets/files/esasafe/pdf/Safety/Holiday-Shopping-Checklist-final.pdf>