



Wright-Hennepin urges members to stay safe this holiday season

Whether you are decorating your home for the holiday season or braving a winter snow storm, Wright-Hennepin would like to remind you of important indoor and outdoor safety tips.

Ladder Safety Tips

On average, 2,900 injuries are treated each year in the emergency room as a result of falling from a ladder or roof.

- Inspect ladders for loose or missing screws, hinges, bolts and nuts before using.
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when decorating outdoors. If your ladder happens to touch a power line, these types of ladders are less likely to conduct electricity.
- Use the correct ladder height, ensuring that your ladder extends at least three feet past the edge of your roof.

Power Line Safety Tips

The biggest cause of electrocution in the U.S. is from contacting power lines. If you plan on decorating outdoors this holiday season, make sure to stay far from electrical equipment.

- High-voltage electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close, even if you have not touched the power line.
- Contact your utility company immediately to report downed power lines.
- Always assume downed power lines are energized and stay 10 feet away from them. Power lines and anything else they may be touching can be energized.
- Before you place a ladder or trim a branch, check the surrounding area to ensure that it will not accidentally come in contact with a power line.

Fire Safety Tips

Nearly 45 percent of home decoration fires are caused by candles each year. Additionally, 260 fires a year begin with holiday trees. Each year, this results in 12 deaths, 24 injuries and \$16.4 million in property damages.

- Never use lit candles on a holiday tree.
- Keep candles away from other decorations and wrapping paper.
- Extinguish all candles before you go to bed or leave home.
- Never leave an open flame unattended.
- Place your tree at least three feet away from any heat sources.
- Do not use electrical ornaments or light strings on artificial trees that have metallic leaves or other branch coverings.
- Look for fire resistant labels when purchasing artificial trees.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness to minimize the fire hazard of dry needles.



Electrical Lighting and Decoration Safety Tips

Seventy percent of Americans will use at least one extension cord for their holiday decorations. Improper use of this equipment results in an average of 170 fires each year from decorative lights.

- Avoid overloading electrical outlets. This can cause them to overheat, and start a fire.
- Inspect each electrical decoration. Make sure there are no cracked or frayed sockets, loose wires or connections.
- Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing burnt bulbs or fuses.
- Never connect more than three strands of lights together.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

Outdoor Decorating Safety Tips

An estimated 5,800 people per year are treated in the emergency room for falls associated with holiday decorating. Half of these injuries result from falling off a roof or ladder while decorating outdoors.

- Make sure all products and extension cords are marked for outdoor use.
- Inspect all lights, decorations and extension cords for damage before using.
- Fasten all outdoor lights securely to trees, the house or other firm supports to protect them from wind damage.
- Keep all extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water.

If you would like more information on decorating your home for the holidays, please visit www.holidaysafety.org or www.esfi.org.