

'Tis the Season to Decorate Safely

by CPSC Blogger December 5

Washington, DC — During November and December 2015, there were six fatalities and an estimated 14,000 injuries treated in hospital ERs nationwide, due to holiday decorations. That's an average of about **230 injuries per day** during the holiday season! Falls, lacerations, back strains and ingestion of foreign objects were among the top holiday decorating-related injuries last season. *To prevent decorating disasters*, CPSC counts down the 12 Ways to Celebrate Safely:

12. Take special care with sharp, weighted, or breakable decorations. Lacerations were among the top reported decoration-related injuries last year.
11. Avoid trimmings that resemble food or candy that may tempt a child to mouth or swallow them.
10. Place decorations with small removable parts that can pose a choking hazard to young children out of reach.
9. Purchase only holiday light sets that bear the marking of a safety testing laboratory.
8. Examine new and old light sets for damage. Discard sets with cracked or broken sockets, frayed or exposed wires, and loose connections.
7. Keep burning candles in sight and away from places where kids and pets can knock them over.
Between 2010 and 2012, candles were the source of an estimated 6,500 residential fires annually, causing 80 deaths, 650 injuries, and \$237 million in property loss per year.
6. Place lighted candles away from items that can catch fire, such as trees, other evergreens, decorations, curtains and furniture.
5. Look for a label that reads "fire resistant" when purchasing an artificial tree. Check live trees for freshness—here's how.

CHECK FOR TREE FRESHNESS

A fresh tree is green

Fresh needles are hard to pull from branches

The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin

When bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break

Bounce the trunk of a tree on the ground - a shower of falling needles shows the tree is too dry



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#HolidayHazards

From 2010 to 2012 there was an estimated annual average of 200 fires where the Christmas tree was the first item ignited, causing 10 deaths, 20 injuries, and \$17 million in property loss per year.

4. Place live Christmas trees away from heat sources, and keep trees well watered.
3. Watch this dramatic fire demonstration of what happens when a dry tree comes in contact with a heat source.

2. Use caution on ladders. Read our [Ladder Safety 101 blog](#) for tips to prevent ladder falls this season. **41% of holiday decorating injuries involve falls. Falls from ladders account for about half of these incidents.**

1. Start with safety in mind. Download and follow CPSC's [Holiday Decoration Safety Tips guide](#).

About U.S. CPSC:

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Deaths, injuries, and property damage from consumer product incidents cost the nation more than \$1 trillion annually. CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical or mechanical hazard. CPSC's work to ensure the safety of consumer products – such as toys, cribs, power tools, cigarette lighters and household chemicals – contributed to a decline in the rate of deaths and injuries associated with consumer products over the past 40 years.

Federal law bars any person from selling products subject to a publicly-announced voluntary recall by a manufacturer or a mandatory recall ordered by the Commission.

To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury go online to www.SaferProducts.gov or call CPSC's Hotline at 800-638-2772 or teletypewriter at 301-595-7054 for the hearing impaired. Consumers can obtain news release and recall information at www.cpsc.gov, on Twitter @USCPSC or by subscribing to CPSC's free e-mail newsletters.