

Lifetime of SAFETY

Safety messages for Texans of all ages

Wrap the Holidays in Safety

It's that time of year again – the holiday season. As millions of Texans begin to plan for all the cooking, decorating and hosting involved, Oncor wants everyone to remember that safety should be considered in all holiday activities.

Residential fires increase across the country during the holidays, according to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). Cooking-related fires are the most common, accounting for 41 percent, but using holiday lights and plug-in, mechanical decorations can also result in fires, as well as electrical shock, if safety rules are not followed.

Because keeping the holidays safe requires special attention throughout the house, Oncor offers electrical safety tips for indoors, outdoors and some that apply everywhere.

Indoor tips:

- **Never use electric lights on a metal tree** and do not use candles on any tree.
- **Don't overload electric outlets** with lights or decorations.
- **Don't run extension cords under rugs, carpets or furniture** where they can overheat.
- **Keep children, pets, and flammable materials** such as curtains away from cooking surfaces.
- **Be sure Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets are installed in your kitchen, and test them often.** Experts estimate that nearly 70 percent of the 400 accidental electrocutions each year could be prevented if every home had GFCIs installed.
- **Keep space heaters on a level surface** and at least three feet from bedding, draperies or other flammable materials.
- **Always turn off appliances, including space heaters, heating pads and electric blankets** when you leave a room.

Outdoor tips:

- **Use only lights and extension cords that are specifically rated for outdoor use.**



- **Keep dry leaves swept away** from outdoor lighting, outlets and power cords.
- **Be sure outdoor electric outlets are covered** to protect them from the elements and that they are GFCIs.
- **When using ladders to hang lights and decorations,** always make sure you have a spotter with you and always check for low, overhead power lines when walking with or standing on ladders.

Indoor/outdoor tips:

- **Before using holiday lights and extension cords,** check them for fraying, cracking or cuts.
- **Be sure your lights are certified by an independent testing lab** such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), CSA International or ITS.
- **Never connect more than three strands of lights together** and never string extension cords together.
- **If you use spotlights to highlight decorations,** keep them well-ventilated and away from anything flammable.
- **Unplug all holiday lights** when going to sleep or leaving home.
- **When replacing a light bulb,** be sure the replacement is of equal or lesser wattage than that recommended by the manufacturer.

For more information about electric safety, visit

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