

## NEWS RELEASE

# Alert: Silent Holiday Killers

– Christmas trees are the first item ignited in over 350 home fires annually, according to the American Association of Safety Councils. As the holiday season gets into full swing, the Council's are reminding residents to use extreme care with all holiday decorations.

“Although decorating can be a fun and festive occasion this time of year, it is important to use caution both at home and at work,” said **Darby Vorce, President**, for the Association. “We remind individuals that the leading cause of decoration-related fires are lights, cords, plugs, and candles.”

To prevent a tragedy during this holiday season, the **Association** offers these Holiday Decoration Tips:

### ***Holiday Lighting:***

- Check all light strands before decorating. Discard worn or frayed cords.
- When decorating a tree, use miniature lights, which have cool-burning bulbs.
- Use only out-door lights on the outside of your home.
- Keep electrical connectors off the ground and out of puddles.
- Never connect more than three light strands together.
- To prevent moisture build up, wrap strand connections with a plastic bag and tie ends with Teflon tape.

### ***Candles:***

- Place candles in a sturdy non-combustible holder.
- Keep pets away from candles, flammable materials, and other decorations.
- Never leave children alone with a burning candle.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended.

### ***Christmas Trees:***

- Use caution when buying a live tree. Dried out trees are fire hazards. Check for freshness by shaking the tree a few times. If only a few needles fall off, the tree is fresh.
- Set the tree up in a stable tree stand that has widespread legs or a broad, flat base.
- Cut one inch off the trunk to help absorb water. Check the water level daily.
- If you use an artificial tree, clean it before use and storage. Dust increases flammability. Wash the tree or wipe it down with a cleaner. Wrap it in plastic before storage.

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