SAFETY NEWSLETTER
SELF INSURED WORKER’S COMPENSATION FUND MEMBERS
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Holiday Safety Tips 2019

- Merry and Bright: Carefully inspect holiday light strings each year and discard any with frayed cords, cracked lamp holders, or loose connections. When replacing bulbs, unplug the light string and be sure to match voltage and wattage to the original bulb.

- Lights Out: Always turn off holiday lights when you leave the house unattended or when going to bed.

- Fresh Is Best: Try to purchase a freshly cut tree, as they are more resistant to ignition. Keep your Christmas tree watered and away from open candles.

- Timing Is Everything: Use an outdoor timer certified by CSA International to switch lights on and off. Lights should be turned on after 7 p.m. to avoid the electricity rush hour.

- Check for the Certification Mark: When purchasing light strings, extension cords, spotlights, electrical decorations, gas appliances, or carbon monoxide alarms, look for the certification mark of an accredited certification organization such as CSA International, UL, or ELT to ensure that the products comply with applicable standards for safety and performance.

- One and Done: Never connect more than one extension cord together; instead use a single cord that is long enough to reach the outlet without stretching, but not so long that it can get easily tangled.

- The Great Outdoors: When hanging outdoor lights, keep electrical connectors off the ground and away from metal rain gutters. Use insulated tape or plastic clips instead of metal nails or tacks to hold them in place.

- Climbing Up: Using a ladder when you put up lights? Choose the correct ladder for the job and double check for a certification mark to ensure your portable ladder complies with applicable standards.

- Keep the Gas Behind Glass: Do not use your gas fireplace if the glass panel is removed, cracked, or broken, and only allow a qualified service person to replace fireplace parts.

- Sound the Alarm: Test your smoke alarms monthly to make sure they work, and be sure to install smoke alarms on every level of your home -- especially near sleeping areas.

- Filter-Friendly Furnace: To help prevent CO hazards in your home, have a qualified heating contractor perform a yearly maintenance check of your furnace and venting system, and clean or replace your furnace filter frequently during the heating seasons.

- Clean the Clutter: Do not store combustible materials such as gasoline, propane, paper, chemicals, paint, rags, and cleaning products near your gas furnace. Gasoline or propane cylinders should be stored outside the home.

- Merry Christmas
Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following a few simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

HOLIDAY DECORATING
- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer’s instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING
- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.

Before Heading Out or to Bed
- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

FACTS
- More than a third of home decoration fires are started by candles.
- Forty-two percent of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

Ref: NFPA, OSHA, NEC, MIOSHA