

Holiday Safety Tips



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF FINANCE

To: COSA Personnel

From: Finance Department, Risk
Management Division

Holiday Lighting, Decorations and Trees

- Use caution with holiday decorations and, whenever possible, choose those made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant and non-combustible materials.
- Replace damaged items before plugging lights in. Do not overload extension cords.
- Don't mount lights in any way that can damage the cord's wire insulation. Never pull or tug lights to remove them.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground-fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- Avoid trimmings that resemble candy and food that may tempt a young child to put them in his mouth.
- Place older ornaments and decorations that might be painted with lead paint out of the reach of small children and pets.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators and portable heaters.
- Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard. Be sure to keep the stand filled with water.

Children and Pets

- Poinsettias are known to be poisonous to humans and animals, so keep them well out of reach, or avoid having them.
- Keep decorations at least 6 inches above the child's reach.
- Avoid using tinsel. It can fall on the floor and a curious child or pet may eat it. This can cause anything from mild distress to death.
- Keep any ribbons on gifts and tree ornaments shorter than 7 inches. A child could wrap a longer strand of ribbon around their neck and choke.
- Avoid mittens with strings for children. The string can get tangled around the child's neck and cause them to choke. It is easier to replace a mitten than a child.
- Watch children and pets around space heaters or the fireplace. Do not leave a child or pet unattended.
- Store scissors and any sharp objects that you use to wrap presents out of your child's reach.
- Inspect wrapped gifts for small decorations, such as candy canes, gingerbread men, and mistletoe berries, all of which are choking hazards.

Security

- Don't post travel plans on social media.
- Have a trusted friend or neighbor to keep an eye on your home.

PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!

