

# Holiday

## Fire Prevention and Home Fire Safety

About 3,500 Americans die each year in fires and about 18,300 are injured. You can stop the fire before it starts. Use this fact sheet to learn how to prevent a fire in your home and know what to do if you have a fire.

### Stop the holiday fire before it starts:



- ▶ Do not place your holiday tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree and it could catch fire by heat, flame, or sparks more easily.
- ▶ Never put holiday tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove.
- ▶ Only use laboratory-tested lighting and extension cords.
- ▶ Never overload outlets or extension cords. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet.
- ▶ Do not leave lit holiday lights on unless someone is in the room.
- ▶ Avoid using lit candles. If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and put them where they cannot be easily knocked over and start a fire.
- ▶ Never leave the home with candles burning.



- ▶ When the tree becomes dry, remove it from your home right away. The best way to get rid of your tree is to take it to a recycling center or have it collected by a community pick-up service.
- ▶ Check holiday lights each year for wires that are worn out or coming apart, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and a lot of bends or twists in the wire.

### Be prepared for a fire:

- ▶ One of the best ways to protect yourself and your family is to have a working smoke alarm that can sound fast for both a fire that has flames, and a smoky fire that has fumes without flames. It is called a “Dual Sensor Smoke Alarm.” A smoke alarm greatly reduces your chances of dying in a fire.
- ▶ Prepare an escape plan and practice it twice a year. Make sure everyone in your family knows at least two (2) escape routes from their bedrooms.



To learn more on how you can help prevent fires and fire deaths, please contact your local fire department's office phone number (not 911) or visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.



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