Holiday Decorating Safety

Decorating your home can be one of the ways to get into the holiday spirit. However, it is important to make sure your decorations are safe and properly put up to avoid injuries to your family this holiday season. Follow these tips:

Outside Decorating Tips:

» Use heavy-duty extension cords designated for outdoor use. Avoid overloading the cords by only using three sets of lights per cord.
» Outside lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI).
» When using ladders to hang decorations, make sure you are following the safety warnings, and keep the ladders and decorations away from overhead power and cable lines.
» Make sure extension cords do not run in the path where people walk or where a snow blower may be used.

Decorating With String Lights Tips:

» Lights should be approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL) on the tag marking they have been inspected for safety hazards.
» Check your lights to make sure there are no frayed wires or cracks.
» Use clips to hang up lights; do not hammer nails or tacks into the electrical cord. Lights should not touch drapes, furniture, or carpet.

» Prevent tripping by keeping cords away from high-traffic areas. Prevent the cords from twisting, kinking or being crushed.
» Turn off lights before going to bed, and use a timer if you are going to be away from home.
» Do not run cords under rugs or in high traffic areas.

Tree Safety Tips:

» If you have a real tree in your home, make sure you are watering it often. Dry trees are more flammable and burn faster than newspaper!
» Prevent trees from falling over by using an eye hook to tie the tree to the wall.
» Keep your breakable decorations to the top of the tree or out of the reach of children.
» Toss the tree when the needles no longer bend but get brittle and break.
» Check the tree often for water needs when it is newly brought into the home or in homes with pets as they often drink from the tree's water source.

Other Safety Tips:

» Use flameless candles instead of real ones, especially in homes with pets or small children and near garland and decorations.
» Keep lit candles away from flammable items and never leave lit candles unattended.
» Be aware of poisonous plants. While festive, poinsettias are poisonous when eaten. Keep them out of reach of children and pets.
» Don't burn wrapping paper in the fireplace. Paper can catch fire very quickly and cause flash fires.
» Assure that trees or other decorations don't block the exits to a room (doors or windows).

Happy Holidays!

For more information contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701.780.1489 or visit safekidsgf.com.

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Holiday Travel Safety Checklist

TIPS FOR FAMILIES

The holidays can be both a joyful and stressful time of year. Families are on the go, running errands, going shopping and taking road trips to visit relatives and friends. Here are tips for keeping your kids safe during holiday travel.

- ☐ **Everybody needs their own restraint.** Make it a rule: everyone buckled, every ride, every time, whether it's the long trip to visit family or around the block to the mall.
- ☐ **If you are flying, take your car seat with you and use it on the plane.** It will be a benefit to have it with you at your destination and when you travel to and from the airport. Let car rental companies know in advance if you need to rent a car seat or booster seat.
- ☐ **Watch out for small kids and distracted drivers in parking lots** that are busier than usual during the holidays.
- ☐ **Remind your inexperienced teen driver to be extra alert** during the holidays when people are more distracted and the weather can be tricky.
- ☐ **Avoid distractions while driving.** No text message or playlist is worth the risk of taking your eyes off the road. Set your GPS to voice activated so you can concentrate on driving without having to look at your phone.
- ☐ **Plan to use a driver or car service to make sure you get home safely if you drink alcohol.**
- ☐ **Keep car exhaust pipes clear of packed snow** to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ☐ **Secure loose objects.** Put hot foods, large gifts and anything that could fly around in a crash in the trunk.
- ☐ In cold states, **prepare for weather emergencies** by packing extra blankets, food and diapers. Keep your phone charged and make sure someone at your destination knows the route you are planning to take.

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