

CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY

We love decorating Christmas trees in our homes during the holidays, but if they're not set up or taken care of properly, they can cause a fire. Christmas tree fires are not that common, but when they do happen they are very serious and usually involve a dried out tree.

Choosing a Tree – Artificial or Fresh Cut

- You can reduce the risk of a Christmas tree fire by choosing to have an artificial tree in your home. Artificial trees are beautiful, reusable and fire resistant, so they are a good, safe choice for holiday decorating.
- If you love the smell and tradition of a real Christmas tree, make sure to choose one with fresh, green needles that don't fall off when touched.

Setting up the Tree

- Before putting the tree in the stand, cut an inch off from the base of the trunk to allow water to be absorbed and keep the tree fresh.
- Make sure to set the tree up at least three feet away from any heat source like a furnace vent, baseboard heater, radiator or fireplace. These won't necessarily set the tree on fire, but will dry it out quickly.

Watering the Tree

- A dry Christmas tree is a serious fire hazard, so be sure to keep the base reservoir full of water.
- It's surprising how much water a tree can absorb, so make watering part of your daily routine and expect to add at least 3-4 liters a day.

Lighting the Tree

- Check lights and cords before using for cracks, frayed wires, damaged light sockets or any signs of wear or overheating. Replace immediately if any problems are found.
- Only use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory like CSA or ULC. This proves that the items have been tested and meet Canadian safety standards.
- Remember to always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving the house or going to sleep.

Safe Disposal

- The biggest risk of Christmas tree fires is after Christmas day. With the busyness of events, gatherings or vacations, it's easy to forget or stop watering and let the tree dry out.
- If you know you are going to be away, it's best to get the tree out of the house before you leave. Check with your community for recycling depot locations or curbside pick-up schedules which makes safe disposal easy.



See more loss prevention tips at www.preventingloss.com

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