



Child Safety



The holidays are a magical time of year for children, who take pleasure in the bright lights, wonderful treats, and shiny new toys that come with the season. However, the most cherished traditions of the holiday season can also be hazardous. The safety of children, a high-risk population for fire deaths and home injuries, must be a primary concern during the holiday season.

ESFi recommends taking the following safety precautions to ensure that this special time of year does not result in tragedy:

Childproof Decorating

- Read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels for any decoration that will be used around young children, such as electronic trains or animatronic dolls. Note if it is appropriate for their age group and determine whether adult supervision is required; plan accordingly.
- Instead of traditional candles, try using battery-operated candles so you can avoid the hazards associated with open flames.
- Keep candles, matches, and lighters out of reach in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children unsupervised when candles are lit.
- Strings of lights and garland are staples of holiday decorating, but they can also pose a strangulation hazard. They should never be used as playthings.
- In homes with small children, try to avoid using decorations that are sharp or breakable. Otherwise, remember to place glass and breakable ornaments out of the reach of small children.
- Avoid putting Christmas tree lights, ornaments, metal hooks, and other small "mouth-sized" decorations near the ground or on lower limbs where they may be easily reached by young children.
- Holly berries, wax fruits, and other decorating items can present choking hazards. Remember to keep this in mind when arranging your decorations.
- Cover any unused outlets on extension cords with plastic caps to prevent children from coming in contact with the live circuit.
- Place electrical cords out of the reach of small children.
- Never allow children to play with lights, electrical decorations, or cords.

Did You Know?

Children under the age of 5 are almost eight times as likely to die in a fire caused by playing with heat sources than the general public (NFPA).