

**Wilton
Christmas Tree Safety
Program**

**Carefully decorating
Christmas trees
can help make
your holidays
safer.**

Facts & figures

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Christmas trees were the items first ignited in an estimated average of 310 reported U.S home structure fires per year in 1999-2002. These fires caused an average of 14 civilian deaths, 40 civilian injuries, and \$16.2 million in direct property damage per year. These statistics include both real and artificial trees.

Facts & figures

On average, one in every 22 reported home Christmas tree fires resulted in a death.

Facts & figures

More than four of every ten home Christmas tree fires are caused by an electrical problem or malfunction. One in four (24%) home Christmas tree fires resulted from a heat source placed too close to the tree. Seven percent were started by children playing with fire.

Facts & figures

- When equipment was involved in the cause of the fire, Lamps, Bulbs or Lighting (18%), and Cords or Plugs (13%) were cited more often than any other type of equipment.

Facts & figures

Candles were the heat source causing the fire in 8% of the home Christmas tree fires per year between 1999 and 2002.

Facts & figures

Sixty-one percent of the home Christmas tree fires were reported in December, 22% were reported in January. Not surprisingly, the number of these fires spikes during the week of December 22-28.

Safety Tips

Safety tips

When decorating Christmas trees, always use safe tree lights. (Some lights are designed only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.) Larger tree lights should also have some type of reflector rather than a bare bulb and all lights should be listed by a testing laboratory, look for a label!

Safety tips

- Never use electric lights on a metal tree.

Safety tips

Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use tree lights. Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used.

Safety tips

- Check your strands of lights to determine the number of strands that may be connected. Connect no more than three strands of push-in bulbs and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.

Safety tips

- Always unplug Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

Safety tips

- Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and extend their life.

Safety tips

Never use lit candles to decorate a tree. When and if you use candles in the same room as your tree, place them well away (at least 3 feet) from tree branches.

Safety tips

- Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily. Do not purchase a tree that is dry or dropping needles.

Safety tips

- When purchasing a live or cut tree, check for fresh, green needles.

Safety tips

- Choose a sturdy tree stand designed not to tip over.

Safety tips

- When purchasing an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.

Safety tips

Children are fascinated with Christmas trees. Keep a watchful eye on them when around the tree and do not let them play with the wiring or lights.

Safety tips

- Store matches and lighters up high, out of the reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.

Safety tips

Make sure the tree is at least three feet (one meter) away from any heat source, such as fireplaces and radiators. Try to position the tree near an outlet so that cords are not running long distances. Do not place the tree where it may block exits.

Safety tips

- Safely dispose of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

Safety tips

- These statistics are based on fires that started with Christmas trees and do not include fires starting with other products. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can very quickly become large. Source: NFPA's One-Stop Data Shop.

- The Wilton Fire Department would like to extend warm wishes to all Wilton Residents for a fire safe holiday season.
- Remember:
Fire Prevention – Everyone/Everyday is a motto to live by.