

Ask a Firefighter: 11-25-08
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Glendale Fire Department hopes you all had a happy and safe Thanksgiving Day. It's that time of year again when many Americans barely have time to enjoy a cold turkey sandwich before thinking about holiday lights and Christmas trees. Glendale Fire wants to remind you of the importance of SAFETY as you begin preparing to decorate your home. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), on average, Christmas trees are the ignition source of approximately 300 U.S. home fires each year resulting in 14 fatalities, 21 injuries and \$16.8 million in property damage. In addition, 44 percent of Christmas tree fires are caused by an electrical problem or malfunction.

This week's question is: How can you keep your family and your home safe during this Holiday Season? Here are some tips from the Glendale Fire Department and the NFPA:

- Decorators should make sure that any electrical cords used are in good working order.
- If you put up a real Christmas tree, regularly check your tree for fresh, green needles. Remember to keep your tree watered at all times and make sure your tree is at least 3 feet from fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, heating vents and other sources of heat. Don't place the tree where it blocks an exit.
- Ensure outside lights, decorations and extension cords are rated for outside use.
- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration – new or old – before plugging it in.
- Don't use staples or nails to have lights strings.
- Test all smoke alarms.
- Create and practice your home escape plans.

Season's Greetings from every member of the Glendale Fire Department!