

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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RELEASE DATE:
December 21, 2023

CAL FIRE ENCOURAGES PRIORITIZING SAFETY DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Sacramento – As the holiday season approaches, CAL FIRE extends a crucial reminder to our community, emphasizing the importance of safety. Festive celebrations, flickering lights and winter greens are hallmarks of the holiday season, but they also present fire risks that can quickly turn this joyous time of year into a devastating one. In the spirit of joy and celebration, it is paramount to ensure that our gatherings are not only enjoyable but also safeguarded, by adopting safety practices to minimize the risk of accidents and injuries.

Across the nation, nearly 47,000 fires occur during the winter holidays claiming more than 500 lives, 2,200 injuries and costing over \$500 million in property damage, per the American Red Cross.

"This holiday season is meant to bring joy to family and friends," said Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal. "By adhering to some straightforward safety guidelines, you can reduce the likelihood of accidents and enjoy a safe holiday celebration."

Here are a few safety tips for the holiday season:

- When incorporating candles into your holiday decor, remember to place them in open areas, at least three feet away from any flammable decorations. Extinguish candles before leaving a room and keep them out of reach of children and pets.
- In the kitchen, where the heart of holiday cooking resides, stay vigilant and avoid distractions. Unattended cooking is a leading cause of home fires, so it's crucial to keep potentially flammable items away from cooking surfaces. Additionally, always check the oven before turning it on and be prepared with a fire extinguisher in case of a fire.
- For those decorating this holiday season, prioritize safety by keeping the tree hydrated with daily watering. Check lights for damage, and position the tree away from exits, fireplaces, and other heat sources. Promptly remove decorations after the holiday season to minimize fire risks.
- When dealing with electrical components, repair or replace worn outlets, cords, and appliances immediately. Use surge protectors for lights to prevent overloads and follow safe practices with extension cords. Unplug lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

Visit www.fire.ca.gov for more ways you can keep you holidays merry and bright.

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