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HOLIDAY AWARENESS:

Don't forget these other great resources:

Healthwise[®] Handbook, the 24-Hour Nurse Line, Nurse Online Chat, Audio Health Information Library[®] and you can go online to www.express-health.com for links to reliable health information.

Challenge: Test the batteries in all your home smoke detectors.

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The holiday season is here! It is that special time of year to deck your home with colorful and twinkling lights. Decorating with electric lighting creates a cheerful atmosphere; it also brings an increased risk of accidental fire. According to the United States Fire Administration, each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 1,650 Americans and cause over \$990 million in damage.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission suggests following these tips to make your holiday a safe one.

Trees:

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and do not break when bent between your fingers.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water.
- Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

Lights:

- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Throw out damaged sets.
- Turn off all holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to protect against electric shock.
- Never use metal hooks or nails to hang wired lights.

Candle Decorations:

- Keep burning candles within sight and out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep candlewicks trimmed to one quarter inch and extinguish taper and pillar candles when they are within two inches of the holder. Votive candles should be put out before the last half-inch of wax starts to melt.
- Do not place candles in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them.
- NEVER use candles to decorate your Christmas tree!
- Use sturdy candleholders that won't tip over easily and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Flameless candles are a good option when children and/or pets are within reach.

Keep your family safe!

Source: www.usfa.dhs.gov | www.firesafety.gov