



IMAGINE THIS!

Imagine this: A warm and bright fireplace, the aroma of food cooking in the kitchen, the twinkle of bright lights on an evergreen tree and candles on tables and hearth. This beautiful scene is part of what we enjoy about the holidays, but, if safety is not first in mind, holidays can bring injuries, or even death.

Christmas tree: A dry tree can go up in flames in seconds, but a well-watered tree may not burn. At purchase, get a fresh cut on the tree trunk, and keep the tree holder filled with water. Choose only freshly cut trees. If you bounce the tree on the pavement, the needles should stay on the tree, not fall to the ground, and the trunk cut should feel sticky. Artificial snow should always be applied with adequate ventilation.

Fireplace: Keep stockings from overhanging the mantle where they may catch fire, and use only fire-retardant decorations on the mantle. Keep all combustibles at least 3 feet from a fire. Keep a fire safety screen in place.

Gifts: Perfumes are popular gifts that can be dangerous because they contain large amounts of alcohol. Perfumes that smell good are more tempting for a child to taste, and even a small amount of alcohol can be dangerous to a child. Also decorations that look like candy or food can tempt a young child to taste them.

Holiday kitchen: Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking. Unattended cooking equipment is the leading cause of home cooking fires, or children could knock into cookware handles and burn themselves with scalding food.

Candles: Candles start almost half of home decoration fires. Keep them in stable holders, and well away from flammable materials, at least 12 inches away. Be sure to put them out when you go to bed, or will not be able to monitor them.

Decorations: Be sure your electrical decorations have a label attesting to their safety from Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or other independent testing laboratory. Check last year's electrical decorations for cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires and loose connections. Never connect more than 3 strings of lights together.

Electrical outlets and cords: Do not overload! Cords should not be pinched by furniture, doors or windows, or placed under rugs, located near heat sources, or attached by nails or staples. Falls caused by tripping over extension cords send hundreds to the hospital each year.

Batteries: Small coin-sized batteries found in many toys and cards can cause severe damage to the esophagus and stomach if swallowed by a child. Larger batteries can leak corrosive acid if bitten or handled. Keep all batteries away from children.

**ALWAYS HAVE AN OPERABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER READILY AVAILABLE AND
REPLACE THE BATTERIES IN YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR ANNUALLY!
HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY**

For more information go to Electrical Safety Foundation Institute website (www.esfi.org).