



Lights

Decorative electric lights add a festive glow to any holiday occasion. And when used moderately, they add only a few cents to your utility bill. Unfortunately, misuse of lights, extension cords or other holiday decorations can create a safety hazard. To keep your holidays bright and safe, follow these simple safety tips:

- Only use lights that have been certified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) to meet UL standards, and are labeled as such.
- Check holiday lights for broken bulbs or sockets, or loose connections — replace if necessary.
- Don't use "indoor use only" lights outside.
- Hang outdoor lights with insulated staples and lighthooks — not nails or tacks. Hang bulbs downward to keep moisture out of the sockets.
- Arrange lights on your tree to touch as few needles as possible.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. Use floodlights to highlight the tree.
- Always turn off tree lights and both outside and inside decorative lights before going to bed or leaving home.



Outdoor Safety

- When decorating outside, always remember to keep yourself, decorations, ladders and other equipment more than 10-feet away from overhead power lines. Look up! If power lines are present, stay away!
- To assure uninterrupted service, keep the outside meter and equipment clear of ice buildup and snow.
- Only use lights and extension cords that are approved for outdoor use.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage.
- Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shock.
- Do not attach anything to utility poles or street lights. It's against the law and a potential safety hazard.



Holiday Safety Tips

From BGE

Trees

- If you use a live tree, make sure it is fresh, water it regularly and handle with care.
 - Check for freshness - a fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break.
 - The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
 - Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.
 - Be sure to keep the tree stand filled with water, because heated rooms can rapidly dry out live trees.
- Look for the label “Fire Resistant” when purchasing an artificial tree.
- Keep the tree away from floor heaters, fireplaces, or other heat sources.
- Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

Electrical

- Check electrical cords for frayed or exposed wiring. Replace if necessary.
- Don't overload extension cords or wall outlets.
- Never run electrical cords under carpets.
- Properly secure electrical cords so they do not become a tripping hazard.

Candles & Decorations

- Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Never place lit candles on or near your tree — or near other decorations.
- Use only nonflammable or flame-retardant decorations.



Indoor Safety

- Have your chimney connections and flues inspected by a professional and cleaned if necessary prior to the start of the heating season.
- Check all carbon monoxide and smoke detectors to be sure they are in working order.
- Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available.
- Always have a first aid kit in your home. Be sure it is stocked and everyone knows where it is.
- Keep space heaters away from the tree, presents, curtains, bedding materials, etc., or try not to use them. Remember to turn them off before leaving your home.
- Before lighting any fire, remove gift paper, boxes, bags, decorations and other objects from fireplace area. Check to see that the flue is open.
- Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.
- In the event of a power outage, call BGE's automated outage reporting number at **1-877-778-2222**.
- In the event of a natural gas leak or other gas or electrical emergency, leave, go to a safe place and then call BGE at **410-685-0123** or **1-800-685-0123**.