



Bay Roberts Volunteer Fire Department
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Electrical Safety Tips for the Holidays

Attached are a few useful tips about how to avoid electrical fires, electrocution, and other electrical injuries this holiday season:

- ✚ Turn off holiday lights before going to sleep or leaving the house unattended. An appliance timer can help manage holiday lights.
- ✚ When stringing lights outside, use a dry, wooden or fibreglass ladder and be sure to stay away from overhead power lines.
- ✚ Use only strings of outdoor lights, spotlights, sockets and extension cords approved by the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL). Ensure they are not frayed or damaged.
- ✚ Before putting up lights, check wires, plugs and sockets for wear or damage. If damaged, either repair or discard them.
- ✚ Use more than one circuit to avoid overloading household wiring. This generally means no more than three light strings connected together.
- ✚ To reduce the risk of electrical shock, make sure that GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupters) protection is provided for outlets at outdoor receptacles and test the GFCI monthly to make sure it is working properly. If GFCI receptacles are not available, portable GFCI equipment may be used. The Consumer Product Safety Commission advises that more than two-thirds of the 300 annual electrocutions nationwide could be prevented with the use of GFCI protection.
- ✚ Do not use candles near flammable materials or where they can be knocked over or reached by small children or family pets.
- ✚ Do not hang lights on a metallic tree. The danger of shock is great. Instead of hanging lights, use a spotlight to illuminate metallic trees.
- ✚ Replace older string light with the new LED lights if possible to reduce heat on Christmas trees.



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- ✚ There should be a smoke detector on every level of the house and outside each sleeping area. It also is important to have detectors installed properly and tested to ensure they are in working condition.
- ✚ If using a live Christmas tree, make sure to check the water level in the tree stand on a daily basis. If the tree appears to be losing a large amount of needles, or if the needles become brittle, do not turn on any electrical lights used for decorations. The heat from the lights may cause a fire.
- ✚ Avoid stringing any outdoor lighting or electrical cords where the water from irrigation or sprinklers may be present. Water and electricity do not mix and can cause serious injury or even death in these conditions.
- ✚ As a precaution, all homes should have at least one class ABC extinguisher, placed in an easily accessible area. An extinguisher with an ABC classification puts out all three types of fires: combustible-liquid fires; fires from burning wood, paper and cloth; and electrical fires. It is important to check the pressure in the extinguisher at least every month and refill or replace if it's low. Know how to properly use the extinguisher.