



# Holiday Safety Tips

Check it Twice for a Safe Holiday Season!

-  Use artificial trees, wreaths and boughs. Cut evergreen trees, wreaths, boughs create a serious fire hazard in public buildings and are not permitted.
-  Injuries due to falls are a major holiday hazard: if you need to hang something higher than you can safely reach, use an approved ladder and not a chair, desk, or box. Make sure you know how to safely use a ladder.
-  Plan your decorating to minimize tripping hazards or snagging clothing.
-  Check your lights before decorating.
  - Make sure all holiday lighting has a label that says it is “UL listed”. If it doesn’t have this label, the lighting is not safe to use.
  - Use only light sets marked as “indoor” or “indoor/outdoor” inside buildings.
  - Make sure all the light sockets are filled before decorating.
  - Keep all lights away from combustible materials such as fabrics or paper decorations.
  - Don’t connect more than three strands of lights to one extension cord.
-  Extension cords can be used with holiday decorations as long as the decorations are taken down within a few weeks.
-  Make sure all light strands and electrical cords are free of cuts, crimps, cracks or repairs. Never use a “three-prong-to-two-prong” plug adapter to by-pass a grounded plug. Keep all electrical cords out of traffic areas, and not under rugs, through doorways or taped to the floor.
-  Conserve electricity and prevent electrical fires: Turn off all lights, appliances and other electrical equipment when the room is unattended and before leaving for the day.
-  Use battery-powered tea-lights, when a candle-light effect is desired. As at all other times of the year, State law prohibits the use of lighted candles, incense, and other fire or ember-producing materials in University buildings.
-  Do more with less; a little bit of bright holiday color can go a long way. Limit the amount of combustible paper or fabrics that are hung on doors, walls, and from ceilings to no more than 5% of the surface area. These materials can enable a fire to spread rapidly.
-  Make sure seasonal decorations do not block, hide or obscure safety equipment such as fire alarm strobe lights or horns, safety signage or evacuation plans, fire extinguishers, safety showers or eyewash units.
-  If you are serving tasty treats during the holiday season remember to keep your hot foods hot (>140 deg F) and cold foods cold (<40 deg F) while storing and serving.

*Courtesy of the University of Wisconsin-Superior Environmental Health and Safety Department, 2009*