

Only You Can Prevent Christmas Tree Fires



Every Christmas season, many families tragically lose their homes because of Christmas tree fires. Here's how to prevent them.

To choose a tree:

- Pick the freshest tree you can find. Hold the tree by the trunk and tap it against the ground. If needles drop profusely, look for another tree.
- Keep the tree outdoors with the trunk in water as long as possible. Once you bring the tree into a heated building, it will dry out more quickly.
- Indoors, keep the trunk in water. Check the water level daily, and refill when needed.
- Don't stand the tree near a fireplace, wood stove, heat register, or electrical wires.

To decorate the tree:

- Purchase only tree lights bearing a UL label from Underwriters Laboratory, which shows they meet safety standards.
- Check for broken bulbs, worn-out insulation, and damaged sockets. Replace or repair as necessary.
- Never attach electrical lights to an artificial, metal tree. Don't overload extension cords.
- Discourage children from touching a decorated tree—it may tip over.
- To discourage pets from attacking the tree, avoid shiny decorations, and don't place tinsel or ornaments on the lower branches.