

For More Information

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Government of Saskatchewan
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Christmas Safety

To ensure that you and yours have a safe and happy holiday season, please remember that some precautions will help prevent injuries. Here are some suggestions that can keep you, your family, and friends safe during the holiday season.

Christmas Tree

- If using a real tree, choose one that is not brittle.
- Keep the tree well-watered at all times.
- Use a sturdy, broad-based stand and place the tree away from floor heaters, fireplaces, or other heat sources.
- Never decorate any tree with candles.
- Use Canadian Standard Association (CSA) certified electric lights.
- If using an artificial tree, choose one that is flame resistant.
- Artificial metallic trees conduct electricity. Do not put electric lights on a metallic tree.
- Do not overload electrical outlets; check all the cords, sockets, and plugs for wear.

Fire Safety

- Use only outdoor approved lights outside your home.
- Examine your light strings each year and discard any that are frayed or have exposed electrical wires.
- Turn off your indoor Christmas lights when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Check batteries in smoke detectors.
- Keep an all-purpose, dry chemical fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.
- Plan fire escape routes; make sure your family knows them.
- Use plastic hooks or insulated staples, not nails or tacks, to put up lights.

Decorations

- Put small tree ornaments and tinsel near the top of your Christmas tree - keep out of reach of toddlers.
- Angel hair is made out of fiberglass. Do not use where children will be present.

- Be careful with plants - the traditional poinsettia is poisonous. It tastes bitter and causes a burning sensation - most children spit it out, but caution is necessary.

Entertaining

- Always remember that your guests are your responsibility.
- Have plenty of non-alcoholic drinks on hand for pregnant and abstaining guests.
- Offer rides, take keys, and call cabs; you will sleep better and so will your friends.
- Always clean up immediately after a holiday party in your home. Children may get up early and could choke on leftover food or consume alcohol or tobacco that was left out.
- Keep holiday candy, nuts, and other choking hazards out of the reach of toddlers.
- Brief babysitters on the safety rules of your home.

Gifts

- Buy age appropriate toys for children. Small parts may cause choking. Ensure all parts such as wheels and eyes are well-secured.
- Throw away all packing materials such as plastic bags and Styrofoam pellets as soon as possible. Children can suffocate while playing with them.
- Children will be interested in everyone's gifts. Quickly put away adult gifts that could be hazardous - perfumes, alcohol, appliances, or power tools.

References

Health Canada, American Academy of Pediatrics, and Safe Kids Canada.