

# Risk Manager

Answers, resources and information to help assess and reduce risk

## Holiday Decoration Safety By Derek Neubauer

The following holiday decorating tips are offered to help keep the festive time of year from being tainted by fires and accidents.

### Trees

- When possible avoid using real or artificial trees in the classroom.
- Many artificial trees are “fire resistant” this does not mean they will not catch fire, but that the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- Place all trees away from heat sources.
- A tree should not be placed at or near high traffic areas.
- Any decorations placed on a tree should not have any sharp edges.
- All tree decorations should be placed above a level to where small children can pull on them.

### Lights

- Use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Check each set of lights for broken, cracked bulbs, and frayed wires.
- No more than three standard size set of lights per extension cord. Make sure the extension cord is rated for the intended use.
- Turn off; unplug all lights when leaving for the day.
- Keep lights out of reach of small children who could pull on the lights.

### Decorations

- Use decorations that are made from non-combustible materials.
- Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.
- Avoid using lit candles.
- Ensure that any hanging decorations do not block security cameras or cause fire or intrusion alarms to be activated.
- Exit signs should not be blocked and emergency exits should not be obstructed by any type of decoration.
- If decorations are placed in stairwells do no place on stair handrails.

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For additional information or training on best practices and safety management within your school entity, please contact Director of Risk Management Sharon Orr at (866) 401-6600, ext. 7152 or [sorr@cmregent.com](mailto:sorr@cmregent.com).