



Glendale Fire Department  
623-930-3400

5800 W. Glenn Dr. Suite 350, Glendale AZ 85301  
www.glendaleaz.com/fire



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 18, 2013  
CONTACT: Michael Young, PIO, 623-238-0179

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT WARNS HOLIDAY DECORATIONS INCREASE RISK OF FIRE**

**Glendale, Ariz.** — With Christmas only a week away, majority of people's attention have turned to the heart of the holiday season. As Residents were hanging holiday lights and decorations, many of them did not realize that these decorations dramatically increased the risk of a fire at their home.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), an estimated 240 home fires involving Christmas trees and another 150 home fires involving holiday lights and other decorative lighting occur each year. Together, these fires result in an average of 21 deaths and \$25 million in direct property damage.

The Glendale Fire Department wants everyone to follow these simple safety tips to ensure a safe and happy holiday season.

- Check holiday lights, even new ones, for damage. Lights packed in small containers may have frayed wires, gaps in the insulation, or broken or cracked lights. Always return or throw away any set of lights that are damaged.
- Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Never link more than three light strands together.
- Check your lights on a daily basis to make sure lights are cool to touch. They should never even get warm.
- When leaving your house, always unplug internal and external holiday lights.
- All decorations including Christmas trees should be nonflammable or flame retardant.
- Make sure decorations do not block exits.
- Never leave a candle burning unattended.
- Keep candles clear of curtains, decorations and other combustibles.
- Open flames like candles should never be on or near a Christmas tree.
- Do not burn holiday wrapping paper in the fireplace because the coating on it could cause a flash fire.

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