

Remember electrical safety when decking the halls

Check light strands and other decorations for signs of wear and tear

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- While decorating can be one more thing to mark off an extensive holiday to-do list, take a little extra time when using electrical light strands or other plug-in decorations and while using a ladder.

Holiday decorating-related injuries include those caused by falls, cuts and back strains, although they can also be related to electrical hazards. For example, "do not use a staple or nail to hang light strands, and always be aware of overhead power line locations when carrying or using ladders or stringing lights," says [Erin Hollinshead](#), executive director of [Safe Electricity](#).



Check your holiday lights and decorate safely

"Like with any home task, it is best to take your time, think before you start and make safety a priority, which includes assessing the condition of lights and other decorations powered by electricity," she adds.

Be on the lookout for damaged light strands, plugs and electrical cords, and discard items that are cracked, old or frayed. Safe Electricity provides these additional holiday decorating safety tips:

- When decorating outside, be aware of overhead power lines. Imagine a 10-foot circle around a power line, and do not let any body part or item (such as light strands or a ladder) enter that 10-foot area.

- When securing light strands, do not nail them into place; instead, use plastic hooks.

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands that can be daisy chained (plugged into one another).

- Make sure lights and extension cords are properly rated; that is, those that are used outside should be rated for outdoor use.

- Before hanging lights, check the strands for broken bulbs as well as fraying or bare wires that could present electrical hazards. Always discard damaged strands.

- Turn off all lights before leaving home or going to sleep or ensure they are timed to do so.

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- Do not run cords under carpets, through doorways or in a way that could cause a tripping hazard.

- Plug lights and decorations that are used outdoors into an outlet with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection. GFCIs detect and prevent dangerous situations where an electric shock could occur.

- When using holiday lights, whether indoors or out, look for certification by an accredited independent testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories.

- Puppies and other pets love to chew on electrical cords, including light strands and extension cords. Keep cords out

of sight or hidden with a cord cover.

- Be careful when using extension cords around crawling babies and toddlers. Check for long electrical cords that span the floor and secure them with cord covers to avoid hazards.

Here is to a happy and safe holiday season. For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

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