



Celebrate the Holidays Safely this Season!

Ontario's Electrical Safety Authority offers tips for safe installation of holiday lights and decorations.

MISSISSAUGA, ON/ Nov. 8, 2013 — As December quickly approaches, so does the festive season with holiday decorating kicking off in earnest in homes across Ontario. The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) offers the following tips to help keep you and your family safe from electrical hazards when buying and installing holiday lighting and decorations.

When buying new electrical holiday decorations ensure products are:

- Rated and marked for where you're planning to use them. Decorations are designed and marked for either indoor or outdoor use.
- Approved for use in Ontario and bear the [mark](#) of an accredited certification agency. A complete list of acceptable certification marks in Ontario is available at www.esasafe.com/electricalproducts/marks. ESA encourages consumers to purchase decorations from reputable and well-established retail outlets.

Before you decorate:

- Replace damaged electrical products including cords, lights and decorations.
- Check the manufacturer's instructions for specific directions on how many strings can be connected together; some limit to three strings.
- Never remove the third prong from the plug of any electrical product—this is a “grounding pin” that works to prevent electric shock in the event of electrical equipment failure.
- Avoid overloading circuits with plugs and extension cords. This can create overheating that could result in a fire. Fuses that frequently blow or circuits that often trip can be a sign of overloading.
- Plug outdoor decorations into receptacles that are protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI)—these are designed to cut off the flow of electricity to avoid shock hazards if the electrical system or product fails. Portable GFCIs are recommended for outdoor decorating.
- Look up! Look out! Check for overhead powerlines before using a ladder to install lights or decorations on your roof or in trees.

During the season:

- Before you turn in for bed and when you leave the house, turn off or unplug holiday lights and electrical decorations.
- Remove lights and decorations when the holidays end and store them until next year so they remain in safe working order. Freezing temperatures may cause cords to crack and holiday decorations are not designed for year-round use.

Stay safe and enjoy the festive decorations this season. For more [holiday safety tips](#) please visit esasafe.com.

About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario with specific responsibilities under the Electricity Act and the Safety and Consumer Statutes Administration Act. As part of its mandate, ESA is responsible for administering regulation in four key areas: the Ontario Electrical Safety Code; licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians; electrical distribution safety; and electrical product safety.

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