

December 2005

December 14th, 2005**Safety Alert For Immediate Release**

**The Electrical Safety Authority Issues a Public Safety Alert
Warning Consumers of Potential Safety Hazards Associated With Holiday Decorations**

Toronto, ON – It is the time when we are preparing to celebrate the holiday season with friends and families. In the hustle and bustle the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) has issued a safety alert warning consumers to be aware of unsafe holiday decorations. A number of products have entered the Ontario market made with non-certified Christmas light strings. The light strings have been mounted onto cardboard backings in familiar holiday and favourite shapes, including: Christmas trees, stars, hearts, windmills, butterflies etc. These do not bear the mark of a recognized certification agency, and have not been tested to ensure they meet established safety standards for Ontario.

Preliminary visual assessment of these products by the Electrical Safety Authority has identified the following unsafe and potentially hazardous characteristics associated with these products.

- The plugs on these units can fall apart exposing live parts.
- The cardboard backing used as the base for the lights is a flammable material.
- The wires connecting the lights are undersized and proper connection means at the plug have not been used.
- The voltage for the lamp has not been identified which means consumers will not know the requirement for safe replacement.

These products are being sold across Ontario in discount retail outlets. The Electrical Safety Authority is continuing to work with other agencies to have these removed from the market.

To keep you and your family safe from potentially hazardous electrical decorations, the Electrical Safety Authority encourages consumers to purchase decorations from well known and established retail outlets, and to always look for the marks of a recognized certification agency on any electrical product that you purchase. For a list of all of the recognized certification agencies and their marks for holiday decorations visit www.esasafe.com.

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