



## Holidays Pose New Risks to Young Children

With the upcoming holidays, young children are naturally fascinated with all of the exciting and new things going on around their home. And in many cases, parents of these children have not considered the possibilities of injuries to their children. Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanzaa all involve presents and new temporary items in their home, all fascinating to a young child.

In order to protect children in these new circumstances, The Home Safety Guru™ recommends the following:

### Trees

- ▶ If you purchase a fresh tree, make certain that the tree, the needles are hard to pull off of branches and the cut trunk is sticky from sap resin. Place tree away from fireplaces, radiators and furnace vents. And always make certain there is water for the tree.
- ▶ Make certain that the tree is stable on the floor. Consider tethering the tree to a wall or to the ceiling to prevent it from falling over.

### Electrical

- ▶ Consider limiting the number of strands that you use and putting them only on upper branches of the tree.
- ▶ Make certain that all larger incandescent lights are fully screwed or inserted into their sockets and are not broken.
- ▶ Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.
- ▶ Make certain that the electrical plugs for these are safely away from the probing fingers of children, especially the ones that allow another strand to be plugged into another strand.
- ▶ Make certain that if your child pulls the light cords out of the wall, there is a safety measure in place to keep the child from inserting something into the outlet.
- ▶ Don't use lights that have liquid inside the bulbs that bubble as they contain harmful chemicals.

### Fires

- ▶ Many fires are started inadvertently by young children around candles cautious about all lit candles.
- ▶ Keep children away from fireplaces.

### General Hazards

- ▶ Use only flame resistant, non-breakable ornaments on the tree. Don't use real food for strings on the tree as the child may attempt to eat them.
- ▶ Avoid using tinsel.
- ▶ Children can easily grab tablecloths that hang over the edge of a table and pull the contents onto them.

### POISON / CHOKING

- ▶ Be aware that the berries of mistletoe and holly are poisonous.
- ▶ Be aware that bows, especially smaller ones can be put into a child's mouth.
- ▶ Make certain that you don't leave holiday candies and nuts easily accessible to a young child.
- ▶ Dispose of gift wrapping as soon as possible as some types are known to contain lead.
- ▶ Always be on the lookout for small items that can pose choking hazards, like toys, candy, decorations, etc.

With all of the activities around the holidays and all of the new things in your home, it is easy to overlook the many new hazards that are presented to toddlers. Colorado Childproofers wants to keep the holidays a time of joy and creating happy, lifelong memories for families, not a time of unfortunate circumstances or tragedy.

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