

Don't Forget Safety This Holiday Season

PPL Electric Utilities Reminds Everyone to Guard Against Electrical Hazards

PPL Electric Utilities

Taking electrical safety shortcuts could get your holiday season remembered for all the wrong reasons.

"We want our customers and all those celebrating with family and friends at this time of the year to play it safe and make sure good safety sense isn't dulled by the holiday rush," said Barry Downes, manager of Health and Safety for the utility. "It's a busy time of year, but we can't forget to do important things such as checking electric cords for damage, not overloading outlets, and more."

Statistics show home fires and electric accidents increase during the winter holidays. At this time of the year, pay extra attention, whether you're hanging holiday decorations, cooking, or warding off the winter chill. Some tips include:

Decorating

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, about 150 home fires are caused each year by decorative and holiday lights. To reduce the likelihood of fire:

- Use lights approved for safe use by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights together. Consider purchasing LED lights, which are more energy efficient and burn cooler.
- Before decorating, determine how many outlets are available and where they are located. Plan your displays accordingly.
- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.
- Make sure that cords are not pinched in doors, windows, or under heavy furniture, which could damage the cord's insulation.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.

Child safety

Children are at high risk for fire deaths and home injuries, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission says seven children are seen in emergency rooms each day in the U.S. for electrical shock and burn injuries caused by tampering with a wall outlet. To help protect children:

- Cover any unused outlets on extension cords with plastic caps to prevent children from coming in contact with the live circuit.
- Place electrical cords out of the reach of small children.
- Never allow children to play with lights, electrical decorations, or cords.
- Use battery-operated candles to avoid the hazards associated with open flames.

Heating equipment

Keeping family and holiday guests warm should always be done with safety in mind. Whether it's your home heating system or supplemental heat, the following tips from ESFI offer help:

- Have your heating system inspected annually by a licensed, qualified professional.
- Use space heaters properly and safely. Keep them out of high-traffic areas and at least three feet from anything that can burn.
- Do not leave a space heater running unattended. Turn space heaters off and unplug them when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Never leave an open flame, including the fireplace, unattended.

“Beyond these seasonal tips, PPL Electric Utilities’ safety page, www.pplelectric.com/safety, is filled with information to help keep you safe no matter the time of year,” Downes said. “We’re committed to public and employee safety. We believe electrical safety is important everywhere, every time, at home, work or play.”

PPL Electric Utilities, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), provides electric delivery services to about 1.4 million customers in Pennsylvania and consistently ranks among the best companies for customer service in the United States. More information is available at www.pplelectric.com.

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