

Don't Take a Holiday from Electrical Safety

Pointers from PPL Electric Utilities Can Protect and Help You Save

PPL Electric Utilities

No matter how you celebrate the holiday season, PPL Electric Utilities wants you to stay safe and also save along the way through being more energy-efficient.

"It's an extremely busy time of year with a lot of distractions, so it's important to take time to stay safe both inside and outside the home," said Gregory N. Dudkin, executive vice president of operations for PPL Electric Utilities. "Statistics show home fires and electric accidents increase during the winter holidays. Please don't take a holiday from safety and risk becoming one of those fire or accident numbers."

Safety is important in key areas this time of the year, whether it's hanging holiday decorations, cooking or warding off the winter chill. Here's a sampling:

Decorating safety

Seasonal lights are beginning to appear on area homes, increasing the chances for electrical hazards. Also:

- Before decorating, determine how many outlets are available and where they are located. Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire. Rule of thumb: Connect no more than three strings of light together or three extension cords.
- Before use, check each light string for broken sockets, frayed cords or faulty plugs, and replace damaged strings. If you need to replace a light bulb, unplug the light string first.
- For outdoors, use only lights, extension cords, animated displays and decorations rated for outdoor use.
- Plug cords into outlets equipped with ground-fault circuit interrupters, and use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them.
- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.
- Never throw light strings into trees near power lines.
- Indoors, keep all decorations at least three feet away from heating sources, including space heaters and fireplaces.
- Don't use electrical ornaments or light strings on artificial trees with metallic leaves or branch coverings.
- Avoid using candles when possible. Never leave an open flame unattended. Extinguish all candles before you go to bed, leave the room or leave the house. Keep candles out of the reach of pets and children and away from combustible material and areas where they might be knocked over.

Cooking safety

Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S., according to the [National Fire Prevention Association](#). Also:

- Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance into a single outlet.
- Match plugs with outlets. Don't force a 3-pronged plug into a 2-pronged outlet or extension cord.
- Keep towels, potholders and curtains away from hot surfaces. Watch for loose clothing that can catch fire.
- Move appliance cords away from hot surfaces where they can melt or burn from excess heat.

Heating equipment safety

Space heaters are increasingly popular for supplemental heating, but remember to give space heaters their space and keep them at least three feet from flammable items such as draperies or blankets. Also:

- Keep space heaters out of high-traffic areas and always place them on a level, solid surface.
- Be sure pets and children are kept away to avoid injury from contact.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- To reduce the chance for electrical overloads, never use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space

heater.

- Get your house heating system cleaned and inspected at least every two years by a licensed, professional contractor.

Save energy, save money

When holiday shopping, remember to look for the ENERGY STAR® label when purchasing appliances or electronics and buy the most efficient model you can afford. These models will reduce your energy costs over the operating life of the device.

If you're going to be away from home for more than a few hours at a time, remember to set the thermostat back a few degrees to save on heating costs.

Savings also can be realized in many other ways, including using a programmable thermostat, installing more insulation if necessary, or sealing leaking air ducts or drafts. Use more energy-efficient ENERGY STAR® compact fluorescent light bulbs to save on electricity costs.

You can give yourself and your family the gift of increased energy efficiency this year by checking out the helpful information at www.pplelectric.com, PPL's online store for discounted products, and the valuable E-power® programs at www.pplelectric.com/epower.

PPL Electric Utilities, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), provides electric delivery service to 1.4 million customers in 29 counties of eastern and central Pennsylvania and has consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States. More information is available at www.pplelectric.com.

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