

Without the possession of knowledge, together with the means of controlling it from generation to generation, human society would make very little progress. Each of us must, therefore, very much, to the educational system that gave him early knowledge, if we wish to have better support education's peaceful needs.

ERRORS OFTEN TRAGIC

Fire Chief Warns Of Holiday Hazards

By PARK H. SMITH
Fire Chief, City of Birmingham

It is the night before Christmas... but not everyone sleeps. In fire stations in Birmingham and throughout the country there's an air of uneasy tension. And for a good reason. Fires at Christmas time are particularly tragic. On the most sentimental day, thousands of homes and apartments are carelessly converted into dangerous fire traps.

TWO YEARS AGO fires on Christmas eve killed 23 persons, most of them children. And in the four-day yuletide weekend last year, fires claimed the lives of 54.

By following several suggestions offered by your fire department, you can prevent fires and save your life and the lives of the ones you love.

The Christmas tree is a potential fire hazard and caution should be taken in its selection, placement in the home and maintenance.

(1) Play safe by choosing a small tree. Keep it outdoors until ready to set up.

(2) WHEN YOU bring the tree inside, cut the butt slantwise to open the pores. Then stand it in a tub of water or moist earth.

(3) In placing the tree, it's best to avoid "hot spots" such as those near the fireplace, television set or radiators.

(4) Never use untreated cotton batting for decorations. Cotton can be made flame-resistant after treatment by dipping in a gallon of warm water mixed with nine ounces of borax and four ounces of boric acid.

(5) BE SURE, too, that Christmas tree light cords are in good condition. Frayed electric cords are a fire hazard. Never use an outlet or plug under the tree or run electric trails around the base.

(6) Keep plenty of large ash trays handy during the holiday season, as always.

(7) If lights are desired in windows, never use candles. Keep curtains and other flammable materials pulled back at least six inches from electric lights.

(8) AFTER YOU have opened your Christmas presents, remove all the gift wrappings and packing materials from your living room and dispose of them.

(9) Adults should take care also in purchasing chemical sets for children. Toys requiring alcohol, kerosene, gasoline or carbide may be hazardous in juvenile hands.

Help Make This Christmas a Brighter and Safer One

Here Are Handy Hints on Home Lighting

To help you make this Christmas season the brightest, safest ever, here are some worthwhile hints on decorating, inside and outside, all around the house.

Caring for Your Christmas Tree

As soon as you bring the tree home, stand it in a pail or tub filled with water until you are ready to set it up and trim it. This will prolong the life and appearance of the tree, keep the needles from falling, and minimize the danger of fire.

Trimming Your Tree

Keep your tree stand water-well full and your tree will remain fresh and fragrant throughout the holidays.

Bear in mind that tree trimming follows a fundamental rule of women's fashions—accentuate the opposite. If your tree is tall and slender, decorating lines should trend toward the horizontal. (See Fig. 1) If it is short and full, trim your tree along lines which tend to be vertical. (See Fig. 2.) Applying this simple rule will help you bring out the best in the tree.

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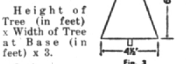
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insurance. To achieve what professionals call a "good lighted effect," try this formula:



Let's say your tree is 6 feet in height and 4 1/2 feet wide at the base. (See Fig. 3.) The formula would work like this: 6 x 4 1/2 x 3=81 lights for "good lighted effect."

While personal taste is the last word in decorating Christmas trees, each year finds more families adopting the above formula which will help in bringing out the natural beauty of their tree and give a good-lighted effect.

No. of lamps required to give a "Good Lighted Effect"

Size of Tree	Effect
4'	36
5'	56
6'	81
7'	110
8'	144
10'	225

Where to Start

Trees should always be trimmed from the top down. In working from the bottom up, a trimmer is literally "in his own way," and runs the risk of knocking the tree down. So start at the top, with your angel or star ornament, and work down.

After your tree-top ornament is firmly in place, string the tree lights, using the formula outlined above for a good lighted effect. Reflectors and halos are available at modest cost, and these greatly increase the brilliance of tree lights.

Next, add your "continuous" decoration, such as string popcorn. Follow this with glass ball ornaments, snow balls, candy canes and similar decorations. Last, add aluminum or lead tinsel, one piece at a time, and finish perhaps with a spray of artificial snow.

Most Important of All—Safety

From coast to coast, some 40,000,000 families will light up their Christmas trees this year. If all of us practice safety, we may make this the year when no Christmas tree fire sweeps through an American home, turning a family's joy into grief.

There is a highly effective way to protect against short circuits and overloading. Simply make sure you plug a safety "fused" plug set

Light Up Those Indoor Focal Points

Windows, end tables, mantels, foyer tables and stair rails are all decorating focal points at Christmas. Window wreaths and candles come in a wide variety to suit the individual taste, while end tables lend themselves to small artificial Christmas trees with lights that bubble or twinkle merrily.



Outdoor Decoration Says Merry Christmas To All

The exterior of your home and your grounds offer tremendous decorating opportunities. But practice safety outside as well as inside. Make sure all outside wire is #12 or #14, rubber insulated and heavy duty.

The best source of current for outdoor lighting is a permanent, protected outdoor-type receptacle, or a garage or porch lamp. Even without such an outlet, you can safely reach an indoor receptacle. Merely drill a hole in a board which will fit a convenient window snugly. Close the window on the board and run the outdoor wire in through the hole in the board. The window can be "bracket-locked" with a stick. (See Fig. 5.)

Your Doorway and Eaves

Lights in outline form around a doorway, outdoor candles and lighted sprays are highly successful indoor decorations, proved over years of use. Many a dining "specialty" display, such as Santas, Snowmen Carolers and the like have more recently come into greater use near front doorways.

The eaves of your roof represent an ideal display point for Christmas lighting. The most common difficulty in eave lighting is a tendency for lights to sag. Eliminate this problem by running the outdoor Christmas sets through drive rings hammered into the eaves at regular intervals up to the house corners and roof peaks. The drive rings will carry your Christmas string of lights in straight and beautiful lines, outlining your home perfectly. (Drive rings are available at hardware stores everywhere.) (See Fig. 6.)



Lighting Evergreens Outdoors

Evergreen trees on your front lawn can be especially appealing when lighted. Generally, lights of a single color are preferred on outdoor evergreens. For an enriched effect, however, try this. Make your topmost light white, and mix perhaps two

an overall patible lights with ferns of green lights.

In order to protect a valuable Blue spruce or Douglas fir, build a simple "teepee" to carry the light strings. Pound stakes into the ground around the tree, inside the spread of the branches, at regular intervals. Then lead rigid wire up from the stakes around the tree stem at this point to a point several inches below the tree-top. Fix a padded wire collar. (See Fig. 7.)

More Tips For You

You may have found just the decorating idea you have been looking for. If you have any other questions or would like additional suggestions on Christmas lighting, contact your local electrical stores.

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