



# NEWS RELEASE

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## HUDGENS OFFERS FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

**Atlanta** – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph T. Hudgens urges Georgians to keep safety in mind when decorating their homes for the holidays.

“Don’t let fire turn your holiday into a tragedy,” Commissioner Hudgens said. “Use common sense when decorating to keep your home safe.”

Commissioner Hudgens offers the following tips for ensuring a safe holiday:

### *Christmas Trees:*

- When purchasing a tree, check the tree for freshness. A dry tree is highly flammable. Use this test: hold a branch about six inches from the tip, and pull your hand toward the tip, allowing the branch to slip through your fingers. If the tree is fresh, very few green needles will come off. Also, lift the tree off the ground and tap the trunk on the ground. Again, very few needles should fall off.
- Before placing the tree in a stand designed not to tip over, cut about six inches off the trunk of the tree and soak the base of the tree in a bucket of water over night.
- The tree stand should be designed to hold plenty of water and checked daily.
- Do not place the tree or natural garland near a fireplace, furnace vents, television, or other heat sources.
- Consider having a live tree with a root ball which can be replanted after the holidays. A live tree is less flammable than a cut tree but still requires watering.

### *Holiday Lights:*

- Buy lights labeled by a recognized testing laboratory and check annually for frayed or damaged cords. On Christmas trees, use small lights that stay cool to the touch or LED lights which also save energy.
- For outside decorations, use only outdoor lights. Never use indoor lights outside.
- Always unplug all decorative lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Don’t overload electrical outlets with multiple plug adaptors or power taps. Use caution with extension cords; make sure they’re placed where they won’t trip anyone; however, avoid running extension cords under carpets or rugs.
- Make sure candles are a safe distance from the tree, curtains, furniture, and other flammable objects. Use large base candles or candles protect in a globe. Don’t leave candles unattended. Keep children and pets away from lit candles.

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