



# Holiday Entertaining Safety Checklist



Use the tips on this checklist to ensure that your home is ready for all of the festive activities the holiday season brings.

## Fire Safety

- ❑ Test your smoke alarms monthly and make sure that your house is protected by an adequate number of working alarms.
- ❑ Smoke alarms should be located inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of your home.
- ❑ Share your fire escape plan, including the location of your outside meeting place, with your overnight guests. Everyone should know at least two ways out of each room in your home.
- ❑ Keep halls, stairs, and doorways properly illuminated and free of clutter and other objects that could hinder an escape during a fire emergency.
- ❑ Consider having older guests or those with mobility issues sleep on the ground floor of the house.

## Decorating Safety

- ❑ Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire.
- ❑ Do not place extension cords where they could cause a tripping hazard, like doorways.
- ❑ Do not run extension cords under rugs or furniture.
- ❑ Keep all decorations 3 feet away from heat sources, including space heaters and fireplaces.
- ❑ Keep young visitors in mind. Place breakables, candles, and other potentially dangerous items out of their reach.
- ❑ Turn off and unplug all decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.
- ❑ Use only weatherproof electrical devices for outside activities. Protect outdoor electrical devices from moisture.
- ❑ Make sure live Christmas trees are watered daily.

## Heating Equipment Safety

- ❑ 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 3 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.



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## Child Safety

- ❑ Put away small items that could pose a choking hazard, like buttons, coins, and jewelry, if you are hosting young children.
- ❑ Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairways to keep babies and toddlers safe.
- ❑ Move all cleaning products and other dangerous items out of reach of children and store them in a locked area.
- ❑ Consider turning your water heater temperature down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to reduce the risk of scalding.\*
- ❑ In homes with young children, install tamper resistant receptacles to prevent electrical shocks and burns, or use safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.
- ❑ Never allow children to play with electrical decorations or cords.

## Electrical Safety

- ❑ Test ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) monthly to ensure that they are working properly.
- ❑ Consider adding new safety technology like tamper resistant receptacles (TRRs) or AFCIs if you are having electrical system maintenance or upgrades performed.
- ❑ Outdoor outlets should be protected with GFCI technology to reduce the risk of electric shock.
- ❑ Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire.
- ❑ Check outlets regularly for problems, including overheating, loose connections, reversed polarity, and corrosion.

## Cooking Safety

- ❑ Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling.
- ❑ Keep children at least 3 feet away from cooking appliances.
- ❑ Keep towels, pot holders, and curtains away from hot surfaces.
- ❑ Wear short or close-fitting sleeves. Loose clothing can catch fire.

\* Lowering water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or below can increase the chance of bacteria growth. Those with weakened immune systems should consult with their doctor before lowering the temperature of their water heaters below 140 degrees Fahrenheit.