



Vol XXV December 2011  
December 2011

### Tips for Safety Installing Christmas Lights

The Christmas season is upon us, and outdoor decorations are being purchased and unpacked with anticipation. Exterior lighting enhances the holidays, but it is important to exercise caution when selecting and installing them. Each year, holiday light contributes to injuries caused by electric shock, falls and fires. Holiday light fires annually cause property damage in excess of \$16 million. Consider the following to avoid injury as you decorate for the holidays.

When purchasing outdoor Christmas light, look for labels marked with UL or ETL. This indicates an independent laboratory recognized by OSHA has tested the product. Outdoor lights with these labels satisfy the minimum standards for product safety.

When selecting lights for exterior installation, be sure the packaging states that it is designated for outdoor use. Outdoor light is weatherproof and designed for **temporary operation** in harsh weather. Do not purchase used Christmas lights or lighting not in the original package.

Lights should be turned off when people are not present and they should not be left on overnight.

Electrical outlets for exterior lighting should accommodate three-prong grounded plugs and should be on an electrical circuit protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Portable outdoor GFCI's can be purchased at hardware stores if this circuit protection is not available.

If extension cords are required for outdoor lights, use those designed for outdoor use with three-prongs. Never use an indoor cord or a cord without the third prong. Plug the cord into a grounded outlet and select a cord with the shortest length that works for our project.

When connecting outdoor light, be careful not to create a maze of extension cords, plugs and wires that all come from the same electrical outlet. Electrical outlets and timers used for Christmas lights should be readily accessible for quick disconnection or adjustment as necessary.

When installing lights be sure to read manufacturer's instructions. These instructions should be stored with the lights and referred to when purchasing replacement bulbs and on future installations.

Check manufacture's guidelines to determine the number of light strings that may be safely plugged together. If the packaging does not indicate the number, connect no more than three light strings together.

Before installing newly purchased or previously used Christmas lighting, plug the string in and make sure all the bulbs operate properly. When unpacking outdoor lights used during previous years, carefully inspect them for frayed, loose or bare wires and damaged bulbs or sockets. **Discard damaged light strings.**

When installing outdoor lights, use screw-in hooks or other fasteners that will not damage the insulation on the lighting strings. Nails and staple guns can easily cut or damage insulation and conductors.

Securely attach outdoor light strings to buildings, trees or other objects to prevent displacement by wind or other weather conditions. When possible, point the lamp sockets down to avoid moisture buildup and do not operate light strings with missing bulbs.

Unplug outdoor lights when replacing bulbs so there is not danger of shock. Reduce damage to lights by handling them carefully when installing and removing them and when packing and storing.

**Remove outdoor lighting at the end of the Christmas season. Christmas lights are not designed to withstand prolonged exposure to sun and weather.**

Ref: Richard Beard, Agricultural Systems Technology and Education Specialist  
Have a happy and safe holiday season.

- Project Management
- Reconstruction/Restoration
- Fire & Water Restoration
- Contents Cleaning & Restoration
- Deodorization
- Structural Cleaning
- Demolition & Debris Removal
- Fire Investigation Support
- Pack Out & Storage

**San Antonio**

Phone: 210-490-2777  
Fax: 210-494-0610  
Toll-Free: 800-486-3621

**Austin**

Phone: 512-443-8822  
Fax: 512-443-8877  
www.gerloffinc.com



- Mold Remediation
- Indoor Air Quality Services

Phone: 210-490-7108  
Fax: 210-490-7478  
www.gcirem.com

14955 Bulverde Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78247  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Serving Texas Since 1985

## December 2011

### Events

- December 1: Austin Claims Luncheon
- December 5: CTFIA Annual Conference
- December 8: IREM Luncheon
- December 9: IWSA Christmas Luncheon
- December 13: SACA Luncheon
- December 15: Austin BOMA Christmas Lunch
- December 20: IIASA Luncheon
- December 21: SAABE Luncheon
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 26: Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Austin Claims Luncheon	2	3
4	5 CTFIA Annual Conference	6	7	8 IREM Luncheon	9 IWSA Christmas Luncheon	10
11	12	13 SACA Luncheon	14	15 Austin BOMA Luncheon	16	17
18	19	20 IIASA Luncheon	21 SAABE Luncheon Texas Prima	22	23	24
25 Christmas Day	26 Holiday	27	28	29	30	31



For a Complete List of our Continuing Education Classes  
visit our websites: [www.gerloffinc.com](http://www.gerloffinc.com) or [www.gcirem.com](http://www.gcirem.com)