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When Decorating for the Holidays, Consider Safety, Saving Energy and Money: Some Tips

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With the holiday season upon us, neighborhoods are starting to twinkle with festive light displays inside and out. Here are some safety tips were recently announced by [Eversource](#) on lighting and the New Canaan Fire Marshal's Office on other decorations, as well.

*(Darienite.com **added the boldface**, not to add urgency but to make the tips quicker to scan so you can concentrate on the ones you don't already follow.)*

FROM EVERSOURCE:

SAFETY

“Before putting up holiday decorations, it’s important to **inspect them** to ensure they’re not broken or

damaged — check lighted displays for cracked sockets, frayed wires or loose connections,” said Ken Bogler, Eversource vice president of safety.

“When decorating outside, we remind people to **work from a stable surface** and to always **be aware of any power lines or other hazards** that might be nearby.”

More Safety Tips:

- **Never run extension cords under rugs or coil them tightly**, which can cause them to overheat
- Water and electricity do not mix so **keep outdoor connections off the ground**
- **Check labels to ensure lights are used properly** — outside light are labeled for outdoor use
- All the parts of the **lights need to be dampness and temperature-proof**
- **Check extension cords for wear**, and plug outdoor lights and decorations **into GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlets**
- **Use advanced power strips** where possible for all holiday lighting to eliminate standby energy loss

SAVE ENERGY, SAVE MONEY

Customers can save money and protect the planet by **replacing traditional incandescent lights** with an energy-efficient light-emitting diode, or LED, holiday decoration.

Not only do LEDs use 80 percent less energy than conventional bulbs, they last longer, and they are brighter and safer, as they are much cooler than incandescent lights. Also, be sure to check for rebates at the Energy Star rebate finder.

More energy-saving tips:

- **Use a programmable timer for lights** to ensure they aren't accidentally left on
- **Turn off room lights** when the tree is lit to save energy while creating a festive atmosphere

You can find more holiday lighting and electrical safety tips on the [Eversource website](#).

FROM THE NEW CANAAN FIRE MARSHAL:

—[This advice](#) was previously published by *NewCanaanite.com*:

As the holiday season fast approaches the New Canaan Fire Marshal's Office wishes all residents a safe and healthy season and offers the following tips:

- Always **use a fireplace screen** to contain flying embers. Candles and holidays go hand in hand and add wonderful warmth to the festive atmosphere. Candles must be **kept away from other combustible decorations and never be left unattended.**
- Embers from fire place ashes can remain hot for several days. If cleaning is necessary **use a proper metal container with tight fitting lid** for disposal.
- **Christmas trees must be kept watered** so they remain moist.
- Make sure Christmas lights and other electrical fixtures are in good working order. **Do not overload outlets.**
- Space heaters must be **properly plugged** directly in to wall outlets and kept **clear of combustibles.**
- Make sure **smoke and CO detectors are present and operating properly.** If you have a security system with smoke detectors, make sure it has it been serviced in the past year.
- **In the kitchen use the timer on your phone** to remind you of pots left on the stove.