

News Release



**Woodruff Electric
Cooperative Corporation**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Woodruff Electric Urges Everyone to Illuminate the Holiday Season with Safety

The holiday season bustles with cheer and celebration. However, don't let the bright and colorful sparkle of the ornamentations distract you from taking the precautions that you need to stay safe when decorating. Woodruff Electric provides tips to help those decorating for the holiday season do so safely.

When selecting your tree, make sure that you consider the safest option for your home. If you are decorating with an artificial tree, make sure you choose one with fire resistance protection. With a real tree, make sure that the needles are green and sturdy with a trunk that is sticky with resin. These are indicators that your tree is well-hydrated. Keep your tree stand filled with water so that the tree does not become overly dry and present a fire hazard.

Always consider the optimal placement of your tree. Never place your tree near heat-emitting devices, such as space heaters or radiators, which can become fire hazards.

Any lights that are hung either inside or outside of the home should have a label indicating that they have been certified by an accredited independent testing laboratory.

Also make sure the lights are rated for the location in which they will be used—whether indoors or outside. Before hanging your lights, check the strands for broken bulbs as well as fraying or bare wires that could present electrical hazards. Always replace damaged products.

Typically, one extension cord should only have three strands of lights connected to it at most, but you should also check that the extension cord is rated for its intended use. Never run extension cords under carpets, through doorways, or where they could be damaged by furniture.

When decorating outside, always be sure to look up and double check that you and any equipment, such as a ladder or a light strand, are a minimum 10 feet away from overhead power lines. When securing light strands, never staple or nail them into place, as this could damage the product. Be sure to turn off all lights before leaving the home or going to sleep. A timer can help you do this.

Lights and decorations that are outdoors should be plugged into an outlet with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection. "GFCIs are inexpensive electrical devices that can be installed in a home's electrical system or built into a

power cord to protect against electrical shock,” explains Tommy Talley, Woodruff Electric’s Safety Coordinator. “A GFCI constantly monitors the flow of electricity through a circuit and will shut the circuit down if it senses a ground fault.”

Woodruff Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Forrest City, is a member-owned electric utility. Woodruff Electric serves electric power to more than 19,000 homes, farms, and businesses in parts of Woodruff, Prairie, Monroe, Cross, St. Francis, Lee, and Phillips counties in eastern Arkansas. The district offices are located in Augusta, Moro and Barton.

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