

Merry and Bright ... and Safe

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF WAYS TO BRIGHTEN UP your season with holiday lighting arrangements. However, according to the National Fire Protection Association, holiday lights and other decorative lighting are involved in an estimated average of 160 home structure fires each year, causing an average of \$9 million in direct property damage. Also, 12 percent of home candle fires occurred in December—1.5 times the monthly average. Keep in mind the following facts to reduce electrical risk from holiday lighting.

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Never leave an open flame unattended.

tended. Keep lit candles within sight, and extinguish all candles before you leave the room or go to bed.

- ▶ Place lighted candles away from combustible materials and areas where they might be knocked over. Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.
- ▶ Keep candles away from other decorations and wrapping paper. Do not burn wrapping paper as a means of disposal.

Trees

Christmas trees themselves also need to be considered. When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree will stay green longer and be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

- ▶ Cut 1–2 inches from the base of the trunk immediately before placing the tree in a stand and filling with water to ensure water absorption.
- ▶ Because heated rooms dry out live trees rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water by refilling daily.
- ▶ When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a label that says “Fire Resistant.” This label indicates that the tree is more resistant to burning.
- ▶ Place your tree at least 3 feet away from all heat sources, including fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.
- ▶ When decorating a tree, only use noncombustible or flame-resistant materials.

—ESFI

Lights

Unlike incandescent bulbs, which generate most of their energy in heat, light-emitting diodes are cool to the touch—which also indicates greater energy efficiency. LEDs are made with epoxy lenses, not glass, and are much more durable.

- ▶ When hanging lights outdoors, use a wooden or fiberglass ladder.
- ▶ Turn off all indoor and outdoor holiday lighting before leaving the house or going to bed.
- ▶ Never drape anything over a light-bulb or lampshade.
- ▶ Avoid using candles when possible. Consider using battery-operated candles instead of traditional candles.
- ▶ Never leave an open flame unat-



Agricultural Tax Exemptions Expire

THE TEXAS COMPTROLLER of Public Accounts announced that all agricultural and timber tax exemption registration numbers will expire as of December 31, 2015, and must be renewed. Members using their Coleman County Electric Cooperative meters for agricultural or timber use who want to keep their ag/timber tax-exempt status must submit the following information to the co-op office by the expiration date:

- 1) A copy of your new ag/timber card with the new expiration date from the Texas comptroller.
- 2) A new Texas Agricultural Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certificate, completed, signed and dated.

If all required paperwork is not provided to us by the expiration date, any taxes that occur due to late paperwork cannot be refunded by the co-op, so please get this information to us at your earliest convenience.

The Texas Agriculture Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification can be downloaded from the co-op's website at colemanelectric.org under the Forms tab, or from the comptroller's website at comptroller.texas.gov. You may also call our office, and we can provide a copy.

The required documents may be mailed to Coleman County Electric Cooperative: P.O. Box 860, Coleman, TX 76834 or faxed to (325) 625-4600. If you have any questions, please give us a call at (325) 625-2128.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Coleman County EC wishes you and yours a blessed and joyful Christmas season.

Our offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, December 24–25, and Friday, January 1, to allow our employees to celebrate the holidays with their families.



Coleman County Electric Cooperative

3300 N. Highway 84 • P.O. Box 860
Coleman, TX 76834

Operating in Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Coke, Concho, Runnels, Taylor and Tom Green counties

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Clint Gardner

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Contact Us

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(325) 625-2128 local

1-800-560-2128 toll-free

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1-800-560-2128 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

colemanelectric.org

Power Tip

Reduce energy for water heating. Simple steps like lowering your heater's temperature and installing low-flow showerheads can reduce your water heating bills.