

Deck the halls safely

There's nothing like putting up lights and decorations to get you in the holiday spirit. It's something that many do each and every year without incident, yet the holidays are also one of the most hazardous times of the year when it comes to electrical fires and accidents.

Allamakee-Clayton REC and Safe Electricity offer several tips as you deck the halls this season:

- When decorating outside, look up and around for power lines. Never throw light or other decorations into trees near power lines.
- Keep ladders, equipment, and yourself at least ten feet from power lines.
- Match plugs with outlets. Do not force a three-pronged plug into a two-pronged outlet or extension cord.
- Outside, use only lights, cords, animated displays, and decorations rated for outdoor use. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use them. Ensure outdoor outlets or extension cords are equipped with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI's).
- Never string more strands of lights together than recommended by the manufacturer.
- Do not staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords. Use plastic or insulated hooks to hang lights.
- Do not attached cords to utility poles.

The outside of your home is not the only place where you need to be cautious of electrical dangers. Also be careful when placing a decorating trees inside your home. The outside of your home is not the only place to use caution. Use care when placing and decorating trees inside your home. Place fresh-cut and artificial trees away from heat sources such as registers, fireplaces, and radiators; water fresh-cut trees frequently. Turn lights off before you go to sleep. Use a timer to help.

Safe Electricity wishes you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. For more information on holiday safety tips visit, SafeElectricity.org.