



**Office of Commissioner of  
Insurance and Safety Fire**  
Protect | Enforce | Educate | Inform

**JOHN F. KING**  
*Commissioner of Insurance  
and Safety Fire*

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **COMMISSIONER KING: STAY SAFE WHEN USING HOLIDAY DECORATIONS**

**ATLANTA** – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King reminds Georgians to take certain precautions when decorating their homes this holiday season. When handled improperly, Christmas trees and other holiday decorations can pose fire safety risks.

As reported by the [National Fire Protection Association](#), fire departments across the nation respond to approximately 160 home fires each year that begin with Christmas trees. Further, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 790 home fires that began with Christmas decorations other than trees. These fires cause an annual average of one death, 26 fire-related injuries, and \$13 million in property damage.

In recognition of these risks, Commissioner King asks Georgians to follow our holiday fire safety tips for keeping your family and home out of harm's way this holiday season.

- Make sure to water live trees daily. Dry trees, as demonstrated by the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#), can become completely engulfed in flames in less than one minute.
- Keep your tree at least three feet from any heat source, including fireplaces, radiators, candles, or heat vents. One in five tree fires could be traced to a heat source that was too close to the tree.
- Check your Christmas lights boxes to see if they have the label of a recognized testing laboratory and to verify whether they are indoor or outdoor lights.
- Turn off all decorations when you go to bed and when you leave the house.
- Inspect all lights and decorations for cracks, damaged sockets, and loose or bare wires. Unplug all electrical lights and devices before conducting any major or minor repair.
- Keep lit candles away from Christmas trees, decorations, and other items that can burn.

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*The mission of the Office of the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner is to protect Georgia families by providing access to vital insurance products and safe buildings through fair regulation that creates economic opportunities for all Georgians.*