

# Christmas lights safety



Below are some simple safety guidelines that should be followed in order to help keep your family safe this Christmas.

## What should I do before putting up my Christmas lights?

- Inspect old Christmas lights and electrical wires for any sign of damage or wear and tear
- Check that all globes are properly fitted and don't use light sets with missing globes, so as to prevent other conductive items being placed inside the light socket
- Read the light manufacturers' safety and installation instructions and follow these carefully
- Only purchase lights which meet Australian safety standards
- Position your Christmas lights away from flammable materials such as curtains and sofas.

## Tips on putting up your Christmas lights:

- Do not place lights close to tinsel and flammable decorations as the heat from lights could start a fire if they are left on for a long time
- Never attach Christmas lights or electrical leads to or near overhead powerlines, power poles or streetlights
- Take care not to overcrowd power points or use double adaptors, and keep power points and adaptors out of reach of children
- When decorating the outside of your house choose lights and light fittings designed for external use
- Take care not to string lights or electrical leads on or near overhead powerlines or the point where the overhead powerlines connect to your house
- Be aware of the location and height of powerlines when carrying and setting up ladders, Christmas trees and decorations
- Wear non-slip footwear and safety equipment when climbing ladders and installing lights on the roof and other hard to reach areas.

## What else can I do to be power safe this Christmas?

- Place extension cords in low traffic areas where they won't be a trip hazard or become damaged
- Switch off the power before plugging in or pulling out the plug and hold the plug not the cord
- Keep power boards to a minimum (no double adapters or piggy back leads) and out of reach of children
- Check you have a safety switch in your meter box or have a licenced electrician install one.



## SAFETY FIRST

- Remember to unplug your Christmas lights before going to bed
- Educate children of the importance of electrical safety and the danger of damaging electrical equipment
- Store and pack Christmas lights in accordance with manufacturer's instructions
- Don't install, move or adjust Christmas lights whilst they are turned on
- Ensure smoke detectors are installed in your home and are in good working order.

Essential Energy recommends you familiarise yourself with the latest WorkCover Code of Practice 'Work near Overhead Powerlines', which can be viewed at [workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://workcover.nsw.gov.au) or you can purchase a copy of the Code of Practice by contacting WorkCover on **1300 799 003**

## Christmas lights safety checklist

### Do:

- ✓ Make electrical safety a high priority
- ✓ Choose lights and fittings designed for external use only when decorating the outside of the house
- ✓ Wear non-slip footwear when climbing ladders and installing lights on the roof and other hard to reach areas
- ✓ Be mindful of the location and height of powerlines when carrying and setting up ladders
- ✓ Only purchase lights which meet Australian safety standards
- ✓ Educate children about the danger of damaging electrical equipment and the importance of electrical safety
- ✓ Keep power points and adaptors out of reach of children
- ✓ Follow Essential Energy's recommendation of installing a safety switch in your meter box
- ✓ These switches disconnect power in the event of an electrical fault
- ✓ Read the light manufacturers' safety and installation instructions and follow carefully
- ✓ Secure lights to avoid breakage in wind and storms
- ✓ Give preference to extra low voltage equipment
- ✓ INVOLVE THE WHOLE FAMILY AND HAVE FUN!

### Don't:

- ✗ Position the Christmas tree near flammable materials such as curtains and sofas
- ✗ Overcrowd powerpoints or use multiple double adaptors
- ✗ Run extension cords near high-traffic areas where someone could trip over
- ✗ Forget to inspect old lights and electrical wires for any sign of damage, wear and tear or frayed or broken leads
- ✗ Forget to check that all globes are properly fitted
- ✗ Use light sets which have missing globes
- ✗ Forget to unplug the Christmas tree before you go to bed
- ✗ String lights or electrical leads on or near overhead powerlines, swimming pools, ponds or the point where the overhead powerlines connect to your house
- ✗ Install, move or adjust lights while they are turned on
- ✗ Modify or alter light kits
- ✗ Place Christmas tree lights near tinsel, as the heat could start a fire if the lights are left on for a long time.

