

By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader

Christmas can be one of the most beautiful times of year with the traditional lights and decor. However, such lighting and decorations can go from beautiful to dangerous in a heartbeat if certain precautions aren't taken.

If a real tree is chosen to adorn the home, it is imperative that the tree stay hydrated. If the tree becomes too dry, it can cause quite a fire hazard in the home said emergency management director Greg Standard.

Extension cords are an item that tend to get used inappropriately during this time of year, Standard added.

“Try to avoid extension cords – particularly overloading extension cords,” he said. “Make sure that you don't attach more things to the extension cord than it is rated for.”

Although candles can provide a very festive glow, they must be used with caution. They should never be used on a tree, Standard warned.

“Candles used as decorations need to be used with caution and adult supervision,” he said. “They are never to be left unattended.”

Keeping electrical decorative options away from wet or damp areas is another way to ensure safety this time of year, Standard said.

“Keep wiring and lighting out of wet areas, gutters, etc.,” he said.

Christmas lighting: Beautiful but dangerous

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“Don’t let them get into standing water. Be sure to have a means to unplug them that doesn’t require getting into the water.”

Although such options have not been publicized yet, Standard urges residents to properly dispose of live Christmas trees at a designated area in town.

“I haven’t heard of disposal options yet, but usually they have some pick up points in town and that is usually publicized around Christmas time,” he said. “Do not put them in your fire place or wood burning stove.”