



## Home Fires Involving Christmas Trees and Holiday Lights, 2003-2007

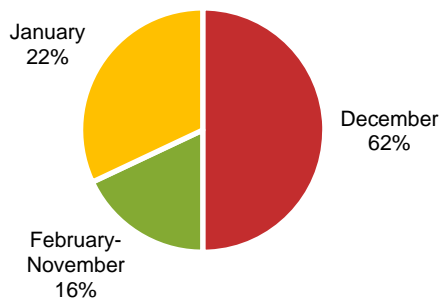
### Christmas Tree Fires

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of **260** home<sup>1</sup> structure fires that began with Christmas trees in 2004-2008. These fires caused an annual average of

- 14 civilian fire deaths
- 26 civilian fire injuries
- \$13.8 million in direct property damage

On average, one of every 21 reported home Christmas tree fires resulted in a death.

**Home Structure Fires in Which Christmas Trees Were First Ignited by Month: 2004-2008**



Thirty-six percent of home Christmas tree structure fires occurred on the ten days between December 24 and January 2.

Electrical problems were factors in one-third of home Christmas tree structure fires.

A heat source was too close to the Christmas tree in one of every five (19%) of these fires.

Thirteen percent of home Christmas tree fires involved decorative lights.

Candles started 11% of home Christmas tree structure fires.

More than one-third (37%) of all home Christmas tree fires started in the living room, family room, or den.

One of every five (19%) home Christmas tree structure fires were intentionally set. More than half of the intentional Christmas tree fires occurred in January and may have been related to disposal.

### Line-Voltage Holiday or Decorative Light Fires

Line-voltage holiday or decorative lights or were involved in an average of 150 home structure fires per year, resulting in an average of

- 8 civilian deaths,
- 16 civilian injuries, and
- \$8.9 million in direct property damage.

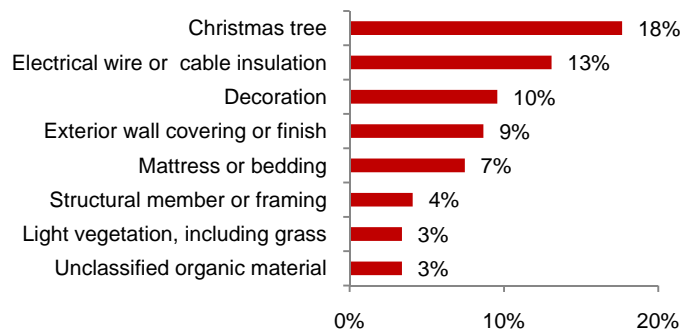
Forty-two percent of these fires were reported in December and 13% occurred in January.

In one-fifth (21%) of these fires, Christmas trees were the item first ignited.

Electrical problems were factors in 67% of these fires. Something that could burn was too close to the lights in 10% of the fires.

Roughly 5,800 people per year were treated at hospital emergency rooms for falls associated with holiday decorations.<sup>2</sup>

**Leading Items First Ignited in Holiday Light Home Structure Fires**



<sup>1</sup>Homes are dwellings, duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, townhouses, and rowhouses.

<sup>2</sup>J.A. Stevens and M Vajami. "Fall-Related Injuries During the Holiday Season -- United States, 2000--2003, *MMWR Weekly*, December 10, 2004, 53(48); 1127-1129, online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5348a1.htm>.