

For Immediate Release

Hiring a professional arborist for outdoor holiday lighting protects people and their trees

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. (November 2014) – An early blanket of snow covering trees in many parts of the U.S. may have consumers thinking twice about setting up their outdoor holiday lighting displays. The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) offers this helpful reminder: hire a professional arborist crew for installation.

“For the homeowners and do-it-yourselfers, don’t push your limits trying to reach those tall peaks and rooflines when stringing holiday lights. It’s not worth the risk,” says Chris Becker, ISA Certified Arborist at Schulhoff Tree & Lawn Care in Denver, Colorado. “I’ve had homeowners who took a serious fall from a two-foot ladder. Arborists are professionally trained to climb, have ladders and aerial lift devices to ascend to higher points, and we always keep safety in mind.”

Arborists can also inspect trees and shrubs during a lighting installation. When trees are lit, it’s easier to detect any structural flaws that may not be noticeable, especially from the ground. Cracks and weak spots in trees can lead to more serious problems under the stress of winter.

“We take great care when installing and removing lights from trees,” says Jon Hanisko, an arborist and ISA New England Chapter member with Lucas Tree Experts in Portland, Maine. “The biggest concern for us is pulling off any new buds on trees and making sure not to damage parts of younger trees that can be soft.”

What to know about outdoor holiday lighting:

- LED lights** – Most professional installers nowadays are exclusively using LED lighting on outdoor trees. LED’s use less electricity, the bulbs last longer and they don’t break easily. Low-output LED lights also put off no heat.
- Remove lights promptly** – Potential damage occurs when lights are left on trees too long. Wires can strangle the branch or trunk, and over time can girdle a tree and kill it. Arborist crews remove lights immediately following the holidays.
- Hire professionals** – There are arborists who help consumers design holiday lighting plans, and provide the complete service package of lights, timers, installation and removal. Some companies even have patented lighting systems available.

Be aware of seasonal crews selling their services only around the holidays. Make sure the company is insured and bonded. If there is a problem with a lighting job, a reputable business will follow-up and make repairs, many times at no cost to the consumer. “We’ve seen plows drive into landscaping and tearing up electrical cords, squirrels chewing on cords, timers going bad and homeowners unaware they’ve unplugged their timers, wondering why the lights don’t work,” adds Becker. “There are always the expected mishaps that come up, but we’ll be there to take care of it.”

To find a certified arborist for your holiday lighting needs, visit ISA’s consumer website, www.treesaregood.org.

About ISA

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), headquartered in Champaign, Ill., is a nonprofit organization supporting tree care research and education around the world. To promote the importance of arboriculture, ISA manages the consumer education web site, www.treesaregood.org, which fulfills the association’s mission to help educate the public about the importance and value of proper tree care. Also, as part of ISA’s dedication to the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees, it offers the only internationally-recognized certification program in the industry. For more information on ISA and Certified Arborists, visit isa-arbor.com.



International Society of Arboriculture

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