

# Media Release



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Immediate Release

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## Light up your holidays, not your home

ACT Fire and Rescue has issued a reminder for Canberra residents to be mindful of potential fire hazards around the home over the holiday break.

“The Christmas and New Year Period is a time for festivities and family gatherings around the barbeque,” ACT Fire and Rescue Chief Officer Paul Swain said.

“Not maintaining your barbeque, or misusing Christmas lights and candles are major contributors to house fires during the holiday season,” he said.

“To avoid barbeque grease fires, ensure that the grease pan or dripping pan is cleaned regularly and never leave the barbecue unattended when cooking.

“Do not leave Christmas lights on when you go out or when you go to sleep and do not let bulbs touch anything that can burn easily, like paper or other decorations.

“Do not leave candles unattended when they are lit and only place candles in stable holders on a heat resistant surface.

“We want ACT families to have a bright and safe Christmas this year, I would urge commonsense when it comes to electrical safety.”

ACT Fire and Rescue has issued the following safety tips for using barbeques and lighting during the holidays:

- To avoid grease fires ensure that the grease pan or dripping pan is cleaned regularly and never leave the barbecue unattended when cooking;
- Do not use petrol to light wooden fuel barbecues;
- Check Christmas lights carefully for frayed wires, bare spots in insulation, broken or cracked sockets and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up;
- Do not overload electrical circuits or power boards; make sure your home or power boards are fitted with an approved overload protection device;
- Do not leave Christmas lights on when you go out or when you go to sleep;
- Do not leave candles unattended when they are lit, only place candles in stable holders on a heat resistant surface and never place candles near trees, decorations, presents or other flammable objects;

Mr Swain also reminded residents to report any fires.

“If a member of the community witnesses a fire, it is vital not to hesitate to contact Emergency Triple Zero (000) and report its location,” Mr Swain said.

For more information on barbeque and electrical safety visit the ACT ESA website at [www.esa.act.gov.au](http://www.esa.act.gov.au).