



HOME CHRISTMAS TREE FIRES FACT SHEET

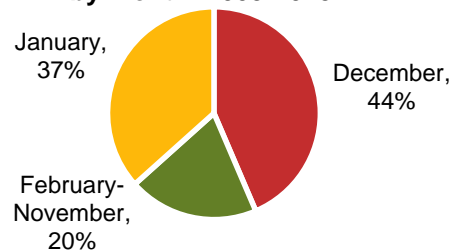
U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 210 home¹ structure fires per year that began with Christmas trees in 2009-2013. These fires caused an annual average of seven civilian deaths, 19 civilian injuries, and \$17.5 million in direct property damage.

On average, one of every 31 reported home Christmas tree fires resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 144 total reported home fires. When these fires occur, they are much more likely to be deadly than most other fires.

Electrical failures or malfunctions were factors in 30% of Christmas tree fires.

In one-quarter (24%) of the Christmas tree fires and two-thirds (67%) of the deaths, some type of heat source, such as a candle or equipment, was too close to the tree.

**Home structure fires
in which Christmas trees were first ignited
by month: 2009-2013**



Four of every five Christmas tree fires occurred in December and January.

Almost half (44%) were in December. More than one-third (37%) were in January.

Leading causes of Christmas tree fires

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 38% of home Christmas tree fires.

- Eighteen percent of home Christmas tree fires involved decorative lights.
- Wiring or related equipment was involved in 12%.
- Cords or plugs were involved in 5%.

Twenty-two percent of Christmas tree fires were intentional.

- Only 9% of the intentional fires occurred in December.

Nine percent of Christmas tree fires were started by someone, usually a child, playing with fire.

Candles started 8% of home Christmas tree structure fires.

Leading areas of origin

Two of every five (39%) home Christmas tree fires started in the living room, family room, or den.

Seven percent were chimney fires.

To learn more about holiday safety, see NFPA's [Winter Holiday Safety Tips](#).

¹ Homes include one- or two-family homes and apartments or other multi-family housing.