



Christmas Season



If you have a "Griswolds House", using more Christmas lights and outdoor ornaments than one can usually find in a hardware store, just to have the brightest house on the block, here are a few tips to consider to keep things festive, safe, and tasteful during this holiday season.

Safety First

Before you begin putting up the lights, make sure that they're all in good working order. Check for burned out or missing bulbs, frayed cords, and unsafe plugs or sockets. Also check your outdoor electrical outlets, and, if you're planning on hanging lights higher than your reach, inspect your ladder as well.

Never climb up on fences, railings, or trees while hanging your lights. Always use a ladder, step-ladder, and/or a hanging rod. Most outdoor lights have three-pronged plugs. Never use any lights that have had the grounding prong removed, and never try to force a three-pronged plug into a two-socket connection.

As you work, cover each connection with electrical tape to prevent short-circuiting. When hanging your lights, make sure that they are well away from any power lines and always use lights that are designed for outdoor use. Make sure that your lights are turned off if you're going to be away from home. This is to prevent any fires cause by any short circuits.

Also check your local weather forecast, try to avoid doing outdoor decorating in cold weather, or when it is icy outdoors. This is to prevent frostbite and any falls.

Decorating an 8-foot Christmas tree:

Type of Bulb	Power Required (Watts)	Energy Used (kWh/yr)	Cost of Electricity/yr	Approximate number of strings & bulbs needed
Incandescent C-7 (5 watt)	625	97	\$6.13	5 strings, 125 bulbs total
Incandescent mini lights	150	23	\$1.47	3 strings, 300 bulbs total
LED C-6 "strawberry" lights	14	2	\$0.14	4 strings, 280 bulbs total

Decorating a 100-foot building outline (windows or eaves):

Type of Bulb	Power Required (Watts)	Energy Used (kWh/yr)	Cost of Electricity/yr	Approximate number of strings & bulbs needed
Incandescent C-7 (5 watt)	500	78	\$4.91	4 strings (each 25 feet long), 100 bulbs total
Incandescent mini lights	200	31.00	\$1.96	4 strings (each 26 feet long), 400 bulbs total
LED C-6 "strawberry" lights	14	2	\$0.14	4 strings (each 24 feet long), 280

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