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### **POST HOLIDAY SAFETY**

**Broomfield/Northglenn, CO**—The twinkle of outdoor lights adds to the spirit of the holiday season, but North Metro Fire Rescue warns citizens to take precautions to avoid getting hung up while taking down this year's decorations.

Holiday lighting and Christmas Trees are meant for temporary use and these items should be taken down each year. "Holiday decorations need prompt attention after the festivities conclude," explains Wendy Forbes, Public Information Officer for North Metro Fire Rescue. "As you prepare to store your lights take a moment to look for frayed cords, loose sockets, and cracked lights." To avoid damage be sure to use the gripping area of the plug when unplugging the lights. Yanking and tugging on the cord can damage the wires and insulation, possibly leading to an electrical shock or fire. Take the initiative now and throw out worn light strings. This way you can shop for replacements during after-Christmas sales or add lights to your Christmas decoration list for next year.

Using appropriate caution when working from heights can make all the difference in avoiding a personal fall injury. Consider the following safety tips from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and UL:

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- Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when near power lines and electrical wiring. Metal ladders conduct electricity.
- Use the right height ladder, ensuring it extends 3 feet over the roofline or working surface.
- Set the ladder on a firm, level surface and avoid soft, muddy ground.
- Never exceed the ladders' weight limit or the maximum load rating.
- Never stand on a step ladder's bucket shelf.
- Only 1 person on the ladder.
- Don't carry equipment while climbing. Buy a tool belt or have someone hand equipment to you.
- Face the ladder when climbing up or down.

Finally, according to the NFPA (2009), 22 percent of the home fires attributed to Christmas trees have occurred in January. The NFPA recommends consumers remove real trees from their home and properly dispose of them once their holiday celebration ends. Even with daily watering, a real tree only lasts approximately four weeks.

So, string up your lights and recycle your tree, but use caution while you work. Let's all have a happy new year by keeping safety in the forefront!

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### **About North Metro Fire Rescue District**

North Metro Fire Rescue is dedicated to your quality care. North Metro Fire Rescue provides fire protection, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response and rescue services to our community. Formed in 1946, the district now covers 63 square miles with a population of approximately 103,000 people including the City and County of Broomfield, the City of Northglenn and unincorporated areas of Boulder, Adams and Jefferson Counties.