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Contact: Taylor W. Wells, (254) 745-2540 taylor.wells@mrelectric.com

Halloween is Scary, But is it Safe?

How to Guard Against Electrical Hazards this Halloween

(ARLINGTON, VA – OCTOBER 24, 2007) –The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) and Mr. Electric[®] urges families to become more knowledgeable about electrical safety by offering free tips on what you can do to protect your children and home this Halloween.

According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), Halloween maintains its spot as one of the biggest decorating holidays of the year, second only to Christmas, with 60% of consumers planning to purchase decorations and almost half (47%) expecting to decorate their home or yard.

“ESFI and *Mr. Electric* encourage everyone to make this Halloween a memorable one by making safety a priority,” said *Mr. Electric* president Jeff Meyers. “Here are a few simple steps that you can take to keep your family and home safe this year.”

- Inspect each decoration before plugging into an outlet. Cracked, frayed, or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious electric shock or start a fire.
- Do not staple or nail through light strings or electrical/extension cords-you could damage the wire or insulation, which could lead to an electrical shock or fire. Use only insulated staples to hold light strings in place, not nails or tacks.
- Keep electric cords out of high-traffic areas.
- Prevent shock by plugging outdoor decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).
- Avoid plugging in too many lights and other decorations into a single outlet. Overloaded outlets can overheat and cause a fire.
- Be careful not to mount or hang light strands in any way that might damage the cord's insulation.
- Use only lights and electrical decorations that have been certified by a recognized independent testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or Intertek (ETL).
- Before using electrical products outdoors, make sure the product is approved and marked “for outdoor use.”
- Turn lights and other decorations off when you leave or go to bed. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it.

ESFI and *Mr. Electric* remind everyone that electricity is a powerful tool. It can also be a lethal hazard. Better safety standards have reduced electrical hazards that cause deaths, injuries and property damage. But good safety habits are still the best prevention against electrical hazards.

For more electrical safety information, please visit ESFI at: www.electrical-safety.org.

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About Mr. Electric[®]:

Established in 1994, *Mr. Electric* is a global franchise organization providing electrical installation and repair services. Recognized by *Entrepreneur* magazine among its “Franchise 500,” *Mr. Electric* franchisees provide these services to both residential and commercial customers at over 200 locations worldwide. *Mr. Electric* is a subsidiary of The Dwyer Group, Inc. For further information or to find the location nearest you, visit www.mrelectric.com.