

2017-2018

# CHRISTMAS TRENDS

CONSUMER VIEWS OF CHRISTMAS  
LIGHTS, TREES & DECORATING



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Nearly 2,000 people from across the U.S.** participated in a nationwide survey to share their thoughts on Christmas decorating. What they said will both amuse and intrigue you.

**Christmas decorating trends are diverse.**

While there may be common themes shared amongst people, how they choose to implement those themes varies tremendously. This year's survey results highlighted some very interesting differences between how men and women approach holiday decorating as well as Christmas decorating trends between age groups.

While people celebrate Christmas in many ways for different reasons, the one area they all tend to find common ground is that they can share the spirit of Christmas through their creative expression. The idea of sharing joy and good tidings comes in many forms and modern Christmas decorating trends embody that now more than ever.

Christmas Lights, Etc would like to thank everyone that participated in this year's survey and the result findings in this report are available for free to all who have an interest.





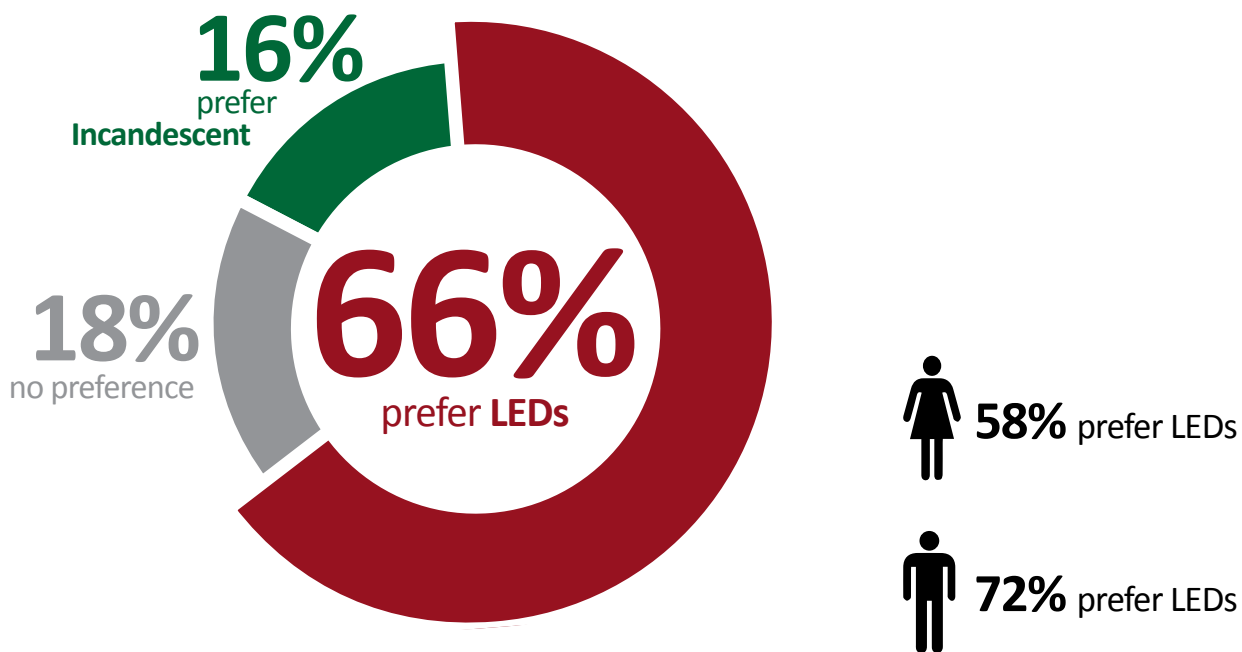
## It's official, the vast majority of people now prefer LED Christmas lights

In the last five years there have been some heated debates on the topic of LED vs incandescent Christmas lights but in 2015, Christmas Lights, Etc surveyed close to 2,500 people nationwide and officially benchmarked that more than half of all Americans preferred LED Christmas lights.

In 2017, that preference grew to 66% of all people preferring LED Christmas lights, which means there is now an overwhelming majority. This is notable because it has only been within the last five years that people have begun making this large-scale change. At this point any debate between the light types is largely over the preference of aesthetics.

As LED prices have come down and products have improved, the large-scale switch enables Christmas decorating at larger scales. While LED lights are still generally more expensive, you can use far more of them without all the electrical hassle that comes with powering larger incandescent displays and there are cost savings longer term because of less power cords, timers and plug strips that are needed not to mention the overall energy savings. As more consumers have become aware of these differences, it has clearly led to a sea change in people's Christmas lighting preferences.

However, these preferences are strangely not shared between men and women equally as most would think. Men prefer LED lights more than women. While 58% of women still prefer LED Christmas lights in general, for men this preference is over 72%. The gender gap on LED preferences is still a bit of a mystery but we learned some things in the 2017 survey that may better illustrate why the differences are there, and it may come down to where women and men tend to decorate for the holidays.





# Who decorates where?

## Over 85% of Families Will Leave Someone Alone on a Ladder this Christmas!

You break out the Christmas decorations to the delight of your family; big smiles all around. You battle through the frustration of untangling the string lights. Your children watch anxiously as you wade through a sea of wires. Finally, a breakthrough. With lights in hand you find your coat and grab the ladder with the sound of people right behind you.

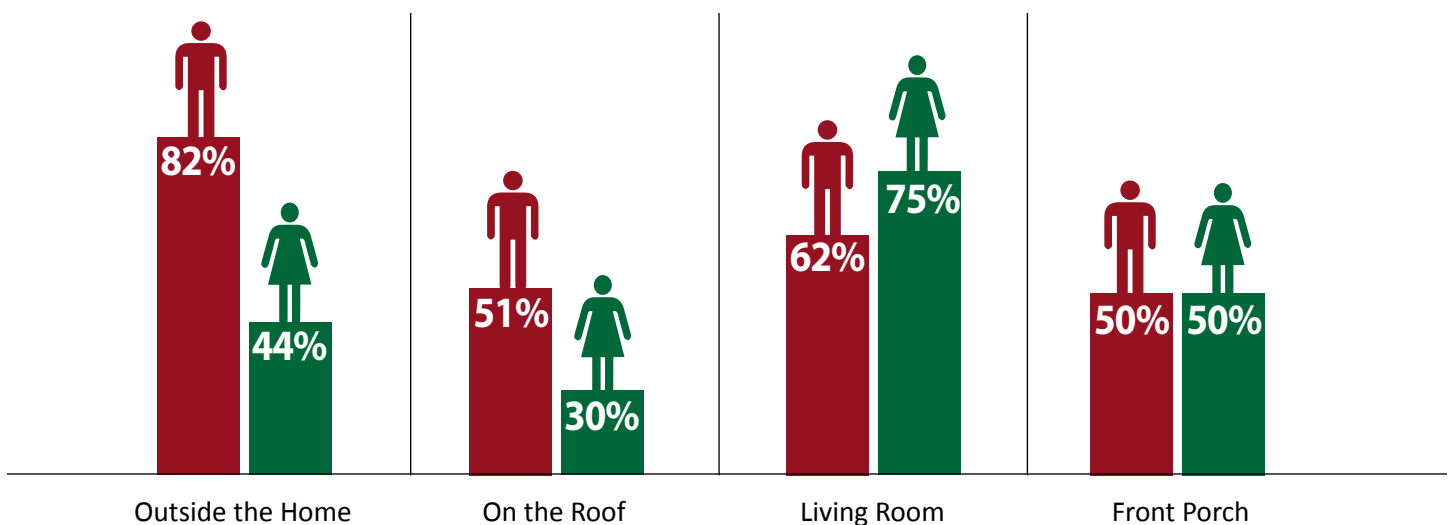
You scale the ladder triumphantly. As you reach the roofline the cold begins to set in and you realize that in your fervor you left the house without gloves. You turn to say, "Hey kids could one of you...", only to realize that everyone has disappeared.

This is a scene that will play out in countless homes across the country. According to the survey, only 13% of people say they decorate the outside of their house as a family. This number rises to nearly 25% when decorating the interior of the home, but that means decorating still falls mostly on one person's shoulders in most homes across America.

## Decorating location preferences between men and women

82% of men indicate they do most of the Christmas decorating outside the home whereas only 44% of women make that claim. But, inside the home the roles reverse. 79% of women say they do most of the decorating inside, but only 31% of men make that claim.

Specific locations generate the biggest differences in decorating. For example, 51% of men say they decorate on the roof. For women, this number drops to 30%. However, 75% of women say they decorate the living room, but for men, that number drops to 62%. And where both the inside and outside meet on the front porch, men and women are evenly split with 50% of both men and women saying they decorate on the porch.





# Who decorates where? (continued)

## Most and Least Decorated House Locations

The most selected locations where both men and women decorate are the living room (68%), family room (54%) and front porch (50%). While the least decorated areas reported were the basement (7%) and garage (13%).

## Locations More Common Than We Think?

More than a quarter of Americans say they decorate their bathrooms for Christmas. While we didn't ask what they decorated in the bathroom, it shows that festive spirit finds its way into many spots. And while the kitchen may be the location associated with all the good food made during the holidays, 49% of women actually say they decorate that too for Christmas.

The two locations with the biggest disparity between men and women: men decorating on the roof and women decorating in the kitchen.

## Age Influencing Decorating Locations?

- 40 and under** are far more likely to decorate on the roof
- 30-59** decorating walkways and driveways favors those in the middle
- 50-69** bathroom decorating surprised us, with this group
- 70+** largely avoid decorating in the basement or garage but that's made up for by twenty somethings that do

Decorating in the yard is more heavily favored by those 30 to 59 but there are interesting patterns where certain ages like to decorate outside:

- 20 somethings favor decorating the windows and roof
- 30 somethings favor the roof and yard
- 40 and 50 somethings favor the yard and bushes
- 60 and 70 somethings lean to the bushes and porch

Most notably, 27% of those 70+ say they still decorate on the roof! We say, more power to you!



## Who chooses the Christmas decor vs. who puts it up

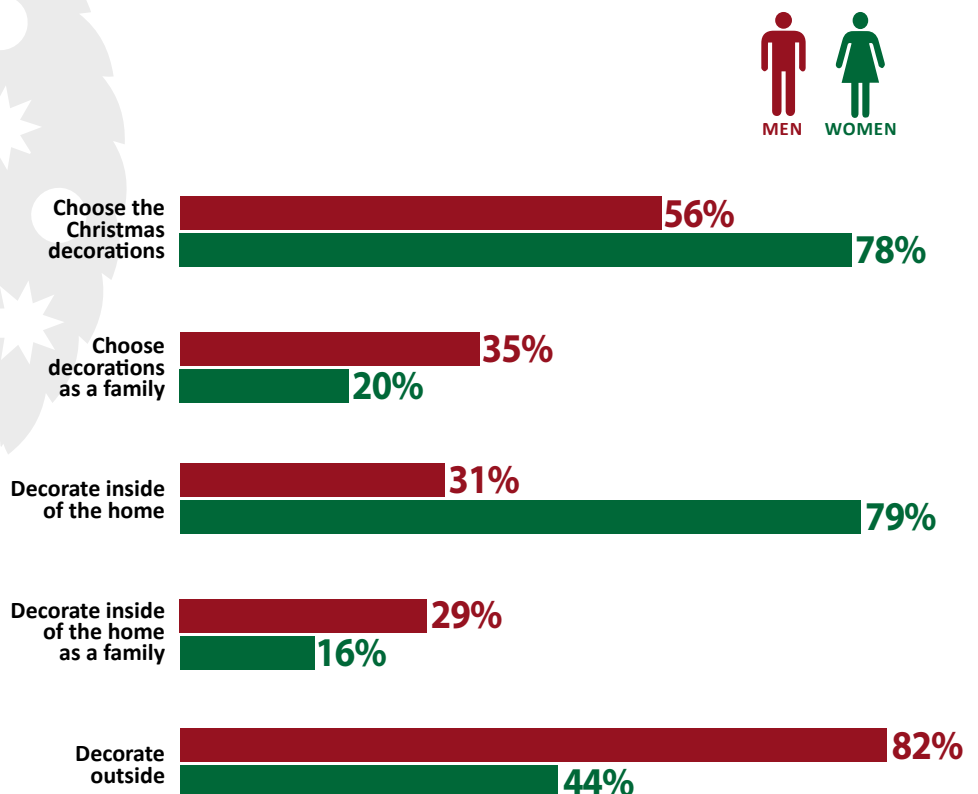
Over 70% of people claim a single person chooses the Christmas decorations in their house but that varies widely depending on who answered the question.

78% of women say they choose the Christmas decorations while 56% of men say they do -- and we're sure a percentage of women let them think that!

What's interesting about how people answered the question is that a third of men say they choose decor as a family. However, less than a quarter of women make the same claim. This could reflect a natural division of responsibility in some homes or it could simply be that more women are involved in selecting all the decor whether it's inside or outside. But, who puts up the decor is equally important.

79% of women say they decorate the inside of the home, whereas only 31% of men make that claim. The script gets flipped though when moving outside the home. 82% of men claim they are the ones doing the Christmas decorating outside whereas only 44% of women make that claim. Notably only 11% of men say the family decorates outside. While there may be a crowd of people inspired by your house decorations this year, chances are it was a lonely road to finish decorating it.

over  
**70%**  
claim a single  
person chooses  
the Christmas  
decorations



more than  
**85%**

of people say they decorate  
with Christmas trees

## What are your favorite types of Christmas Decorations?

More than 85% of people say they decorate with Christmas trees, which is by far the most chosen type of decor followed by wreaths at 58%. Ornaments, mini lights and garland round out the top five most chosen decorations.

Women disproportionately liked ornaments more than men and men disproportionately liked C7 and C9 string lights more than women, further illustrating the differences between the genders when it comes to Christmas decorating inside or outside the home.

Mini lights have long been the go-to solution for Christmas lighting needs, but a change might be on the rise. Respondents who chose string lights as one of their favorite decorations show changing preferences through the generations. For respondents 60 years of age and older, mini is the preferred bulb size, but for respondents 40 years of age and younger, larger C7 and C9 bulbs are preferred.

This evolving trend may coincide with the change to LED. Thanks to LED these larger C7/C9 string lights are more energy efficient. LED technology is shrinking the price gap between powering mini bulb string lights and large bulb string lights.

## Top 5

1. Trees
2. Wreaths
3. Ornaments
4. Mini string lights
5. Garlands



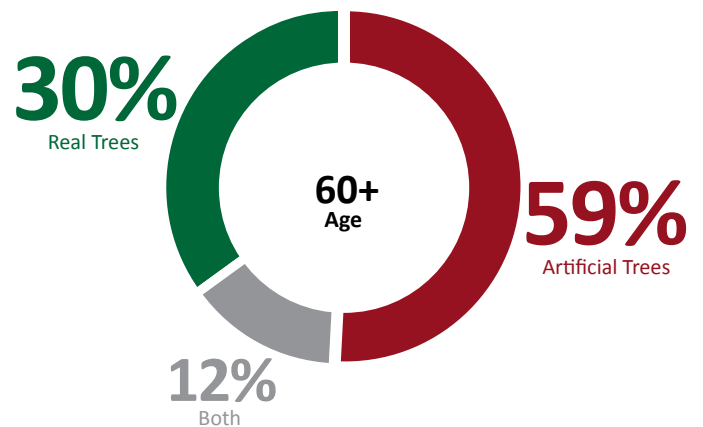
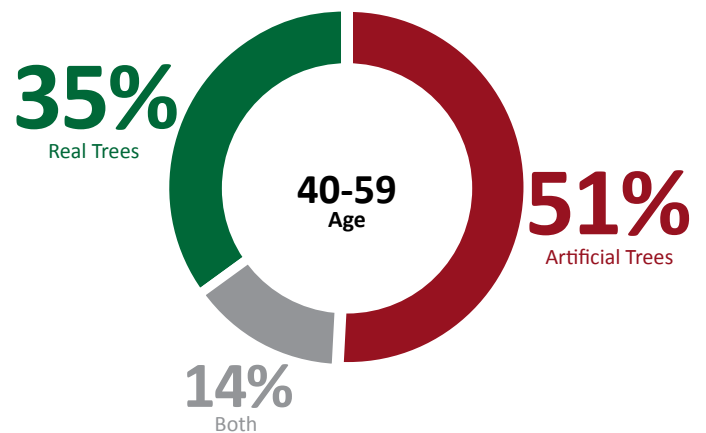
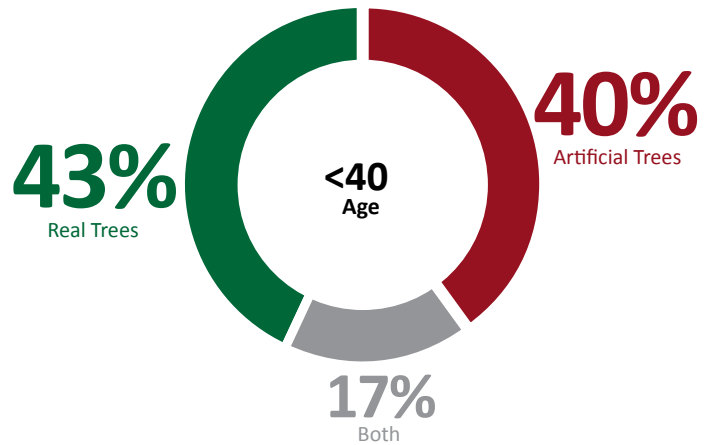
## Real Trees vs. Artificial Trees

Over 54% of respondents who chose Christmas trees as one of their favorite decorations said that they prefer artificial trees; only 33% preferred real trees to artificial and 13% liked both equally.

The popularity of artificial trees appears to increase with age. For example, people under 40 preferred real Christmas trees slightly more than artificial. However, for people 40+, the preference leans more heavily to artificial Christmas trees.

While the Christmas tree is an iconic decor item the debate between real and artificial can get heated, but it often comes down to personal preference. Women slightly prefer artificial trees more than men and they are split evenly when it comes to preferences for real trees.

However, the Christmas tree phenomenon also spans multiple rooms. 53% of people say they have 2 or more Christmas trees displayed in their home now. 9% say they actually have 5 or more trees being displayed around their home. Given the amount of people who say they like both types, it's entirely possible that a house may have a real tree in one room and artificial trees in another.







## What is the hardest part about Christmas decorating?

Overwhelmingly, 63% of people say taking all the decorations down when Christmas is over is the hardest part of decorating. 35% say finding the time to decorate is the most difficult part.

The act of retrieving decorations from storage closets, basements and attics was also routinely mentioned along with figuring out electrical needs and being on a budget. This particular topic was split relatively the same between men and women but the pain points changed depending on age.

While the different age groups all selected very similar options, the order in which they ranked them highlights shifting priorities. For example, young Christmas enthusiasts cited being on a budget as the top concern whereas the older people get, finding time to decorate becomes harder. For those 60+, budget and time were not as much a concern. Unpacking all the decorations, setting up trees and then taking all the decor back down are what those 60+ find to be hardest parts of decorating.

### 60+

1. Taking all of the decorations back down after Christmas
2. Unpacking the decorations from storage
3. Putting up the tree and fluffing the branches

### 50-59

1. Taking all of the decorations back down after Christmas
2. Finding the time to decorate
3. Being on a budget and wanting to do more

### 40-49

1. Taking all of the decorations back down after Christmas
2. Being on a budget and wanting to do more
3. Finding the time to decorate

### 30-39

1. Taking all of the decorations back down after Christmas
2. Being on a budget and wanting to do more
3. Finding the time to decorate

### 30 and under

1. Being on a budget and wanting to do more
2. Taking all of the decorations back down after Christmas
3. Finding the time to decorate



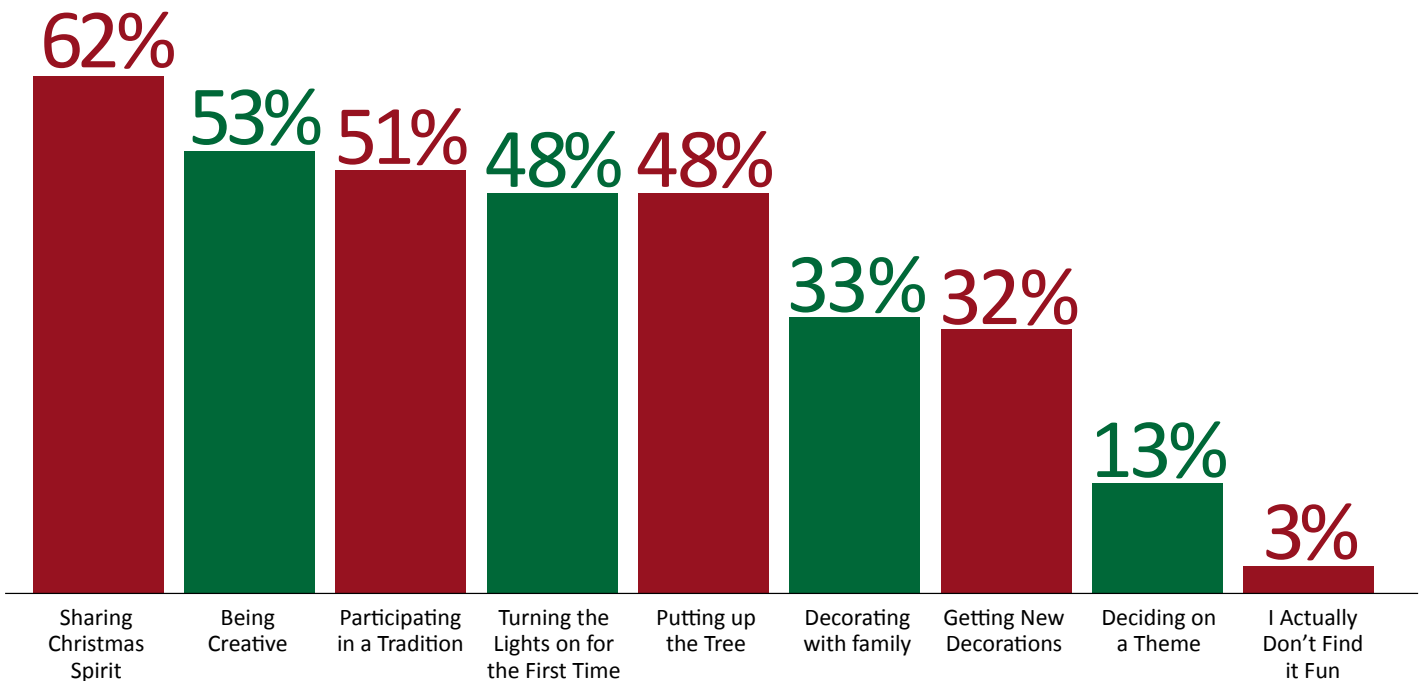
# Top 5

1. Sharing Christmas spirit through your decorations
2. Being creative
3. Participating in a tradition
4. Turning the lights on for the first time
5. Putting up the tree

## What are the most fun parts about decorating for Christmas?

62% of people cited sharing Christmas spirit through decorations as the most fun part about decorating for Christmas. More than half of respondents also chose “being creative” as one of the most fun parts about decorating. More than half also cited participating in a tradition as one of the most enjoyable aspects of decorating for Christmas.

While men and women may have distinct differences related to decorating styles and locations, they share a lot of common ground in what they enjoy about decorating in general.





## Top Christmas Movies

No Christmas survey is complete without getting people's opinions about their favorite Christmas movies. The Christmas holiday has inspired a number of movies - some modern, some classic, some inspirational, and some just plain fun. For some, sharing a Christmas movie with loved ones is a favorite holiday pastime. So, we asked people about their favorite Christmas movies, and the results were fascinating. While many older people long for the wholesome Christmas standards, younger folks appreciate a mix of classics and movies released during their own childhood.

### 60+

1. Miracle on 34th Street
2. It's a Wonderful Life
3. White Christmas

### 50-59

1. It's a Wonderful Life
2. How the Grinch Stole Christmas
3. Charlie Brown Christmas

### 40-49

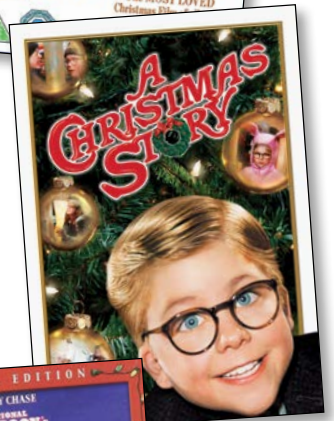
1. A Christmas Story
2. A Charlie Brown Christmas
3. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation

### 30-39

1. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation
2. Home Alone
3. Elf

### 30 and under

1. How the Grinch Stole Christmas
2. A Christmas Story
3. Home Alone





# Create Something Wonderful!

Christmas Lights, Etc thanks you for taking the time to learn more about Christmas decorating trends and we thank everyone who participated in this nationwide survey. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact us.

[www.ChristmasLightsEtc.com](http://www.ChristmasLightsEtc.com)  
1-866-962-7382



Christmas Lights, Etc  
205 Curie Dr.  
Alpharetta, GA 30005  
866-962-7382