

CONTACT:

WEIGH ALL BENEFITS OF REAL VS. FAKE CHRISTMAS TREES

The age-old debate continues: Which is better, a real or fake holiday tree?

Both sides of the argument offer compelling reasons as to which is the better choice for your holiday decorating. But from an environmental standpoint, live holiday trees are the sure winner.

Most artificial Christmas trees are made of metals and plastics. The plastic material, typically PVC, can be a potential source of hazardous lead. Also, the plastics are non-biodegradable and non-recyclable. Natural trees are renewable and recyclable. Most are planted to be harvested, just as pumpkins are cultivated for the Halloween season. Also, each acre of trees produces the daily oxygen requirements of 18 people.

If you can't bear the thought of cutting a live tree or purchasing one that's already been cut, consider purchasing a live tree planted in a container and replanting it outdoors next spring. Also, decorating a tree already in your yard for the holidays with "edible" decorations spreads the holiday cheer to our four-legged and feathered friends.

If you buy a real tree, it's important to ensure that it is recycled after the holidays. Christmas trees are reborn for five large-scale uses including chipping, beachfront erosion control, lake and river shoreline stabilization, fish habitat and river delta sedimentation management.

Each year, Bay Staters purchase more than one million Christmas trees and most communities offer tree recycling after the holidays. For more information about your community's program, visit Earth 911 at www.earth911.org.

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