



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Contact: Karen Eubanks, Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

### **(Recipe for a “Green” Christmas Tree)**

While a decorated tree may be a favorite holiday decoration, it can also be one of the most hazardous if precautions are not taken. “If ignited, a burning tree can be an eight foot blow torch - immediately igniting furniture, carpeting, and the walls and ceiling of your home in minutes,” states Karen Eubanks, Public Information Officer.

#### **To keep your tree as fresh as possible, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue advises the following:**

- Select a fresh tree. Grab the branches and if the needles fall off in your hands, the tree is dry.
- Before placing in a stand, make a fresh cut (1/2 – 1 inch).
- Place your tree in a sturdy, tall tree stand and immediately fill with water.
- Water your tree DAILY. Most trees consume between a quart and a gallon of water each day. Do not let the water level drop below the base of the trunk; the tree will form a seal of pitch and will no longer consume water.
- Place your tree away from heat sources and open flames including heat vents, fireplaces, and candles.
- Decorate your tree with UL-approved, miniature lights that produce less heat.
- Do not overload electrical sockets and always turn off lights before going to bed or leaving your home.
- Periodically check your tree for freshness by grabbing the branches. If the needles fall off in your hand, your tree is dry and should be disposed of.
- When it’s time to dispose of your tree, NEVER burn it in a fireplace. The combination of oil, pitch, and dry branches can ignite within seconds, sending sparks and flames into a room.
- For added protection, check all smoke alarms to ensure they are working in case of a fire and keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children.

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