



# SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF

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## **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **- Christmas Tree Fire Safety -**

SANTA BARBARA, Ca. November 29, 2011 – We think of the holidays as happy times, a chance to celebrate with family and friends. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. Well-watered trees are not a problem. Dry and neglected trees can be. The Santa Barbara County Fire Department wants to wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season, and offers the following suggestions to keep your holiday safe:

- When purchasing a live tree, look for signs of freshness. A fresh tree is green, the needles will be difficult to pull from branches, and a minimum number of needles should fall off.
- To keep your tree fresh, cut off about 2 inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption, and check the water level daily. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- When placing your tree in your home, make sure it is kept away from heat sources like fire places or heater vents. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks.
- Make sure no exits are blocked by the tree.
- Check your lights before placing them on your tree. Look for worn or frayed wires and broken bulbs.
- When you leave your home or go to sleep at night, turn off the lights on the tree.
- Dispose of your tree properly. Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community curbside pick-up service.
- Check your smoke detectors to make sure they are working properly.

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department wants you to remember that fires don't take a holiday. By taking some precautions, you and your family can celebrate a fire-safe holiday.

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All Santa Barbara County Fire Department Public Service Announcements are available at

[www.sbcfire.com](http://www.sbcfire.com)

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