

CHRISTMAS TREE PROTOCOL

DID YOU KNOW?
CHRISTMAS TREES COLLECT DUST AND CONTAMINANTS THAT CAN MAKE US SICK!

Christmas trees are a common - but often unnoticed - trigger of respiratory issues.

Some basic information and a simple plan to reduce exposure can allow everyone to enjoy their trees healthfully!



WHAT COMES INSIDE WITH YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE?

REAL TREE

- Pollen
- Allergens
- Mold
- Brake Dust
- Asphalt from the road
- Outdoor pollutants
- Pesticides
- Pests in the tree (bugs, termites)



ARTIFICIAL TREE

- Dust
- Fiberglass insulation
- Mold (on the box)
- Chemicals odors
- Lead* (this is from the bright colors in the needles)
- PVC Plastic
- VOCs
- Flame Retardants
- Mice / mice urine (in the box)



TIPS FOR BUYING TREES

ADD LIMITING YOUR EXPOSURE TO CHEMICALS!



REAL TREES

Look for trees that have been grown without pesticides.



ARTIFICIAL TREES

Look for a PVC-free tree made from polyethylene (PE)².

Whether real or artificial, Christmas trees can trigger allergy and asthma symptoms and leave you not feeling your best during the holidays. But a few easy steps can keep your tree (and you) healthy and ready to enjoy family, food, and presents!

REAL TREE

ARTIFICIAL TREE

IF YOU'RE SENSITIVE CONSIDER WEARING A MASK WHILE SETTING UP YOUR TREE.

- Remove wrapping and rinse liberally with a garden hose. Run the water from the trunk along the branches to the outermost needles, top to bottom. Give the tree a quick couple of shakes, like a dog does when wet, to remove excess water and then leave outside or in a garage to dry before bringing into the house.
- Once set up, use a genuine HEPA vacuum under and around the tree to pick up shed needles and other particulates.

- If you have a newly purchased tree, keep it outside for a few days before setting it up in the house to allow some of the chemicals to dissipate. You can do this outside or in the garage.
- If you are unpacking a tree from storage, dust, vacuum, gently rinse off all the particulates that have accumulated on the box and tree. Do this prior to bringing the tree into the house.
- Wash hands after handling the tree to get rid of any residual chemicals.

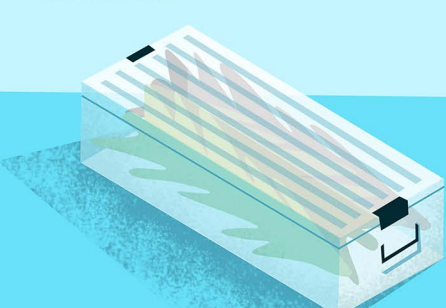
DON'T FORGET TO DUST YOUR ORNAMENTS!

DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- Keep it watered! Fresh trees can soak up 1 gallon of water every 24 hours.
 - Keep kids and pets away from the tree and always wash hands after handling the tree to minimize lead exposure.
- Keep all trees away from heat sources like vents, fireplaces, space heaters, and candles!

AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

- After taking off your decorations, consider wrapping your tree in an old sheet to get it outside without shedding needles.
- Follow local guidelines for disposal. Many authorities will organize a special curbside collection of trees after the holidays.
- Remember to remove all decorations from the tree or it will be treated as garbage and not recycled.
- Take down the decorations and repeat the cleaning process you used before setting it up.
- Wipe down ornaments that had significant contact with the tree.
- Store the tree in a tightly sealed bin to keep dust and pests out. You can also wrap pieces in sturdy black trash bags and tape closed to protect from dust and damage. Recycle cardboard boxes so they don't become a food source for cockroaches, mice, or mold.



¹ A 2002 study conducted at the University of North Carolina at Asheville that found three out of four artificial trees tested contained lead that translates to 50 million American households with a PVC-based artificial tree.

² Polyethylene is stronger plastic generally considered safer and not known to leach harmful chemicals.