



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

## Christmas Tree Cutting Safety & Preparation Checklist

### Before You Go:

- Measure the space for the tree (height and width) and your vehicle's cargo area.
- Inform someone of your plans, including expected arrival and return times, and the tree-cutting location.
- Check weather conditions and road closures.
- Pack food, water, blankets, and warm clothing for everyone.
- Bring a map, ensure your vehicle has a full tank of gas, and consider using studded tires or chains. Four-wheel drive may be necessary.
- Carry a spare key, shovel, and tow chain for emergencies.
- Bring a measuring tape, handsaw, tarp, and rope or straps to secure the tree.
- Dress warmly with weather-resistant clothing, including a hat, scarf, gloves, and boots.



### During Your Trip:

- Start early and aim to finish cutting and transporting your tree before dark.
- Park safely, without blocking gates or roads.
- Choose a tree from a dense area to allow remaining trees more space to grow. Ensure it fits the measured space.
- Cut the stump at ground level and remove leftover branches. Scatter the branches.
- Carry your tree out of the woods to avoid damaging needles and bark.
- If the tree is too large to fit inside your vehicle, wrap it in a tarp or canvas and secure it to your vehicle.

### After You Return Home:

- If storing the tree outside, place it in a protected area like the north or east side of your house or under a shaded tree.
- Cut off 1 inch from the bottom of the trunk and discard it.
- Submerge the trunk in water and check the water level daily. A fresh tree can absorb up to one gallon of water per day.
- Keep the tree away from heat sources like vents, fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, TVs, and sunny windows.
- Use miniature lights to reduce heat and drying. Check for frayed wires or broken sockets. Discard and replace damaged light sets.
- Turn off the tree lights when leaving the house or going to bed.
- After Christmas, dispose of the tree responsibly through local pick-up services or chipping and compost programs. Do not burn any part of the tree in a wood stove or fireplace.