

Using the Fireproofing Solution for your Christmas Tree

1. Once you get home with your new tree, get a saw and IMMEDIATELY make a fresh cut at the base of the tree trunk. This is mandatory for any tree you've bought. Make your cut about an inch above the bottom of the trunk.
2. Next, you'll need a place to store your tree for a few days before taking it into your home, as it takes a few days for the preservative mentioned in the next step to fully saturate the tree. An ideal place would be the carport/garage or possibly a balcony for apartment dwellers.
3. Immediately after making your cut from the bottom of the tree, mix the homemade preservative as follows:
Into a 2-gallon (or 1-gallon jugs) bucket, add HOT WATER from the kitchen tap. Fill the bucket to within an inch or so of the top, then add the following ingredients:
 - ...2 cups of Karo syrup
 - ...2 ounces of liquid chlorine bleach
 - ...2 pinches of Epsom salt
 - ...½ teaspoon of Boraxo
 - ...1 teaspoon of chelated iron (pronounced KEY-lated)Stir these ingredients thoroughly in the bucket(s); then IMMEDIATELY stand the trunk of the tree in this solution. Leave the tree in the solution containers for a day or two until you're ready to take it indoors and decorate it.
4. After taking the tree indoors, make sure to put it in a stand with a water reservoir at the bottom. Once the tree is secured in its "final resting place", get the bucket containing your preservative and FILL THE RESERVOIR IN THE TREE STAND TO THE TOP.
5. Last but not least, EVERY DAY, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, MAKE SURE THE RESERVOIR IS KEPT FILLED TO THE TOP WITH THE PRESERVATIVE SOLUTION.
That's all there is to it. If you follow these steps faithfully, you will have a completely FIREPROOFED Christmas Tree to enjoy throughout the holidays.

And, for those inquisitive minds, here's an explanation of why and how it works.

The Karo syrup provides the SUGAR, and it is only in the presence of sugar that tremendous amounts of water will be taken up by the exposed tissue at the base of the trunk. Without the sugar, only the smallest amount of water will be absorbed. However, in the presence of sugar, you can expect more than 1½ gallons of the solution to be absorbed by the tree during a 10-14 day period.

But there's more. Thanks to the boron you have supplied (in the Boraxo), the water and sugar will be moved to every needle and branch of the tree. Remember, boron is what makes sugar move, not only in trees, but vegetables, fruits and even houseplants.

Then, there's the Epsom salt and the chelated iron. Epsom salt is magnesium sulfate, and magnesium (together with iron) is the center molecules in the process we know as chlorophyll production. By making the magnesium and iron available to the tree, you're assuring yourself of green needles, even if the tree was not sprayed at the tree farm before being shipped to the market.

But what about the chlorine bleach? Chlorine stops a mold from forming when water and sugar stand for any period of time. Here, the chlorine stops the mold from forming in the bucket and the reservoir of the tree stand where your preservative sits.

Benefits

1. Your tree will be SOAKING WET with water. In fact, at least 800% more water than when the tree was growing in the forest! This in turn prevents the tree from becoming a fire hazard.
2. No needles will drop, no matter what variety of evergreen you choose to display in your home. At the same time, the tree will give off a fragrance like that which you've sensed while walking through a forest of evergreens or strolling through the Christmas tree lot.
3. Finally, make the test yourself. When the holidays are over and the tree is taken down and moved outdoors, cut one of the branches off. Move away from the tree and try to light the branch with a match. IT WON'T BURN!!! So, take the time to fireproof your live evergreen tree this Christmas and enjoy a safe holiday!!!

Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association
8550 United Plaza Blvd., Suite 1001
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Toll free: (877) 405-5372
Phone: (225) 408-4757
E-mail: lepa@pncca.com
Web: www.lepa.org