



City of Houston NEWS RELEASE

Solid Waste Management Department

Harry J. Hayes, Director

Annise D. Parker, Mayor

For Immediate Release

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RECYCLING CHRISTMAS TREES: A HOUSTON TRADITION FOR TWO DECADES

(HOUSTON, TX-December 30, 2010)-The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department (SWMD) joined by Vice-Mayor Pro tem Edward Gonzalez, Mayor Parker's Sustainability Director Laura Spanjian, Houston Parks and Recreation Department Director Joe Turner, Living Earth's Marketing Manager Richard Stamper and Reliant Energy gathered outside the official City Hall Christmas tree to kick off Houston's 20th year of Christmas tree recycling. The verdant beauty tall in stature was quickly chopped down and prepared on the spot for mulch as a visual representation of what happens when Houstonians recycle their Christmas tree.

Every year, many Houstonians discard thousands of used Christmas trees that could be recycled into useable products. The City of Houston is encouraging residents to recycle their Christmas trees, give them a new lease on life and continue the recycling of Christmas trees as a family tradition. There are 18 recycling drop-off sites throughout Houston. This program will continue through January 9, 2010. All drop-off sites will be closed on New Year's Day.

Since the Christmas tree recycling program began, more than 22 million pounds of Christmas trees have been recycled. "That amount is equivalent to 1336 African Savannah (or bush) elephants, the largest living land animal. Another way to look at the weight of each elephant is 6 full size pickup trucks stacked on top of each other. That's a lot of reusable material that has been diverted from area landfills," said Solid Waste Management Deputy Director Ed Chen.

The SWMD is requesting that residents remove tinsel, lights, ornaments, all tree stands (plastic and/or wooden) and plastic water bowls from the trees. The recycled trees will be converted into mulch, which will in turn help save landfill space and help preserve the environment.

Living Earth, a leading composting company in Houston, has partnered with the City of Houston to make this a very cost-effective program for the City. Living Earth composts all the Christmas trees at no cost to the City.

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Residents with City of Houston Automated Garbage Collection Service may place their trees at the curb on their tree waste collection day to have their Christmas Tree recycled.

Flocked trees will not be accepted for recycling; they will be picked up on the neighborhood's scheduled junk waste day in February. They can be brought to the neighborhood depository/recycling center for free with a water bill or utility bill along with a matching TX Driver's license or I.D. to show proof of Houston residency. Identification is not needed for recycling-only for junk waste. Commercial vendor trees will not be accepted.

Please bring residential Christmas trees to one of the following drop-off locations:

Dec. 27, 2010 through Jan. 9, 2011
(Closed Jan. 1, 2011)

OPEN DAILY, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

- Sunbeam Neighborhood Depository - 5100 Sunbeam
- Central Neighborhood Depository - 2240 Central St.
- Kirkpatrick Neighborhood Depository - 5565 Kirkpatrick
- Windfern Neighborhood Depository - 6023 Windfern
- N. Main Neighborhood Depository - 9003 N. Main
- Southwest Neighborhood Depository - 10785 SW Freeway
- Doss Park (gates close at 5) - 2500 Frick Road
- Memorial Park (Ball Fields 4 and 5) - 7300 Memorial Drive
- T.C. Jester Park - 4200 T.C. Jester West
- Kingwood - 4102 Rustic Woods Drive
- Ellington Airport Recycling Drop-off - HWY 3 @ Brantley Road

MON-SAT 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., CLOSED SUNDAY

- Westpark Consumer Recycling Center - 5900 Westpark

MON-SAT 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., CLOSED SUNDAY

- Living Earth - 5625 Crawford Road
- Living Earth - 1503 Industrial Drive (Gessner @ Hwy 90)
- Living Earth - 1700 Highway 90A East
- Living Earth - 12202 Cutten Road
- Living Earth - 16138 Highway 6
- Living Earth - 5210 S. Sam Houston Pkwy.

The Solid Waste Management Department provides solid waste services to the citizens of Houston through the collection, disposal and recycling of discarded material in a manner that is safe, efficient, environmentally-sound and cost-effective.

For more information regarding Christmas Tree recycling, to find out designated tree waste collection day, residents can call 3-1-1 or visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org.

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