



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Senator Helming: Christmas Tree Safety Tips

PAMELA HELMING December 5, 2019

| ISSUE: **CHRISTMAS**



Christmas is a time where we come together as families and make new memories. For many of us, these memories include cutting down our tree from a local Christmas tree farm, tying it on top of our vehicle, and then sometimes struggling to set it up in our living room. One thing that no one's Christmas should include is a house fire. To prevent this, there are several common sense steps you can take to protect yourself and your family.

The American Christmas Tree Association recommends the following:

- Fresh trees are less likely to catch fire, so look for a tree with vibrant green needles that are hard to pluck and don't break easily from its branches. The tree shouldn't be shedding its needles readily.
- Always place your tree away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and keep the tree base filled with water to avoid a dry out.
- Make sure all your indoor and outdoor Christmas lights have been tested in a lab by the UL or ETL/ITSNA for safety, and throw out any damaged lights.
- Any lights you use outdoors must be labeled suitable for exterior placement, and be sure to plug them into a ground-fault circuit interrupter protected receptacle.
- Keep all your holiday candles away from your Christmas tree, surrounding furniture and décor.
- Bedtime means lights off! Don't forget to turn your Christmas tree lights off each night.

We have many terrific family owned Christmas tree farms across the region. Many of which have full gift shops and offer wreaths and other seasonal items. I encourage you to check out the New York State Christmas Tree Farmers Association website at

[www.ctfany.org/SearchFarm.php](http://www.ctfany.org/SearchFarm.php) and find a local farm close to you! I wish you and your family a healthy and safe Christmas season!