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Consider the Environment when Purchasing your Christmas Tree this Holiday Season
OC Waste & Recycling Reminds Residents to Buy Real Trees and Recycle

SANTA ANA, Calif. (December 11, 2008) – If you are thinking of buying an artificial Christmas tree this year, OC Waste & Recycling encourages you to reconsider. County recycling specialists are asking residents to purchase real Christmas trees to help the environment.

"Many people are under the impression that they are helping the environment by purchasing a plastic tree because it is reusable," said Jan Goss, recycling specialist and director of OC Waste & Recycling. "However, eventually residents throw away that plastic tree and it ends up in a landfill, where it takes hundreds of years to decompose. A real tree will fully decompose and release nitrogen and other elements back into the soil much faster."

According to the National Christmas Tree Association, real Christmas trees are better for the environment because they are a renewable resource; new trees are planted every year. Another "green" alternative, if there is land available to plant in when the holiday season is over, is a live Christmas tree with the roots intact. Most artificial trees are made from plastics and metals that consume natural resources and do not promote new growth.

The Center for Health, Environment and Justice has added fake Christmas trees to its list of potential products made from Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) plastic, one of the most hazardous consumer products created.

"The safest bet is to buy a real Christmas tree grown locally," said Goss. "You can support your community and avoid the cost to the environment."

In Orange County, trash haulers collect real trees from curbsides after the holidays, and process the green waste into reusable materials. They have requested that all residents remove tinsel, ornaments and tree stands from the tree. Flocked trees cannot be recycled but will be picked up.

All cities in Orange County will collect Christmas trees for approximately two weeks following Christmas Day at no additional charge.

For more information about Christmas tree pick-up in your area, please visit www.oclandfills.com or call 714-834-4000.

About OC Waste & Recycling

OC Waste & Recycling manages one of the nation's premiere solid waste disposal systems serving 34 cities and over three million residents. On behalf of local residents and businesses, OC Waste & Recycling has developed a solid waste management system composed of a network of three active landfills and four household hazardous waste collection centers.

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