

## Hot Climate - Care Tips

Drying winds and heat from any source, whether it be the sun, asphalt, concrete, heat build-up in a storage trailer or even reflections from nearby buildings, are enemies of freshly cut Christmas trees.

The key to maintaining maximum freshness in your trees is not only to protect them from heat, sun, wind, but also to add water.

Because rainfall normally is continuous in the Northwest during the harvest period, trees coming from there have little chance to dry prior to shipment. Ideally, trees awaiting sale to the consumer would be warehoused at 40-50 degrees Fahrenheit with a humidity of 90 percent. Since this rarely is possible, the best substitute is to create as closely as possible this ideal condition.

### Here's How You Can Keep Your Trees Fresh, Attractive And Saleable

- Set up a schedule of several shipments so that trees arrive as they are needed, preferably not before December 1. If you need to order sooner, be sure you have a way to keep them fresh. [See our tips below.](#)
- Maintain a high level of humidity (moisture) in tree storage areas in climates which are dry and/or windy (or even hot) during the retail selling season.
- Never store trees in the sun. Moistened wood shavings and sawdust are sometimes used to insulate trees from hot asphalt or concrete.
- Trees stored in hot asphalt can absorb a petroleum smell and residue. In addition, the heat absorbed by the asphalt during the day will be re-radiated to the trees at night and cause further drying.
- Store your trees on pallets covered by shade cloth or burlap or in trailers (parked in the shade) or in a cool warehouse. Shade cloth, a plastic mesh which blocks out a high percentage of sunlight, may be purchased through a nursery supply store.
- To prevent heat build-up, create several inches of air space between the trees and the cover cloth when storing palletized trees under Shade cloth

- Keep stored trees moist by frequent waterings. Note: if trees are moistened with water containing heavy amounts of chlorine, the needles may bleach. Where the water supply has been heavily chlorinated, *water beneath the trees*.
- Leave your stored trees baled to reduce the amount of surface exposed to drying conditions. Baled trees stored in the sun quickly brown from heat build-up, particularly the areas directly under the twine.
- Trucks or trailers holding stored trees should be parked in the shade and the trees should be covered with moistened burlap.
- Do not leave moistened trees in piles *more than one week* to avoid mold forming.
- Always sell the oldest inventory first. "First in, first out" is the axiom of the wise tree-seller.
- Trees should be displayed in water. Make a fresh butt cut so that the trees can take up water. Trees without water remain fresh one-third to one-half as long as trees with a fresh cut in a water stand.
- Irrigate overhead the trees at night to increase humidity and lessen drying.
- Do your customers a favor and make a fresh cut on all trees before they leave the lot. The customer then has 5-6 hours to get the tree into a water stand without the necessity of making another fresh cut.
- The inner rings of the tree are the least efficient in taking up water. Removing the outer rings of wood to fit the butt of a tree into a water stand takes away the most efficient water-carrying wood.