

## THE TWELVE HASSLES OF CHRISTMAS

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All other things being equal, in a free market when prices go up, market share goes down, and vice versa. It is called price elasticity and it is a cornerstone of any free-market system. So why has the price of REAL Christmas trees remained unchanged in constant dollars for decades while the market continues to deteriorate? While it is tempting to blame fake plastic trees in a Walmart world, seemingly insensitive to our environment or where products come from, consider also that problems associated with REAL trees have not been adequately addressed. That makes it easy for the guys with the "fake" trees from China to step in and fill the void.

### **TWELVE HASSLES OF CHRISTMAS**

1. Sap on Hands, Clothing & Car
2. Re-cutting Stem at Home
3. Damage to Car & Finish
4. Repair or Replace Stand
5. Installing Stand at Home
6. Spilled Water - Floor & Gifts
7. Daily Refilling Water
8. Dry-Tree Fire Hazard
9. Tree Removal Water Spills
10. Cleanup & Drag Outside
11. Disposal of Spent Tree
12. Removal & Storing Stand

When we ask people about buying choices, fake tree and REAL tree buyers alike, we hear what we refer to as the **TWELVE HASSLES OF CHRISTMAS**.

These very real issues affect every buyer's decisions, year-after-year and it is no surprise that many have gravitated to the fake tree option.

Scientists have told us for years that a fresh cut on the stem of the tree is essential to enable the tree to absorb water, but we also know that almost nobody does it. Most people don't own chain saws and attempting this with a hand saw is near the top of the Hassle list. Expecting customers, after failed decades of coaching, to suddenly start sawing off stems is not rational - it is too easy to opt for fake plastic.

The evidence is overwhelming that putting "preservatives" in the water is worse than "snake-oil" - it actually causes premature drying and needle shedding. Yet suppliers continue to offer it and consumers continue to buy it. How about the tree stand that requires removal of the other layer of the stem so it can't absorb water, or the ones that don't hold enough water to last through the day?

We are all aware of the hazards of overloading landfills with PVC plastic, polluting the earth with toxic out-gassing for thousands of years. None-the-less, consumers continue to buy plastic disposal bags, plastic tree stands and those goofy looking plastic Santa faces on otherwise REAL Holiday wreaths.

The good news is that there are alternatives. One product on the market prevents the tree sap all-over-everything issue, and avoids having to re-cut the stem at home. Another product greatly minimizes the anxiety that comes with handling water around gifts and spilling it on the floor. Totally biodegradable stands and bags, made in the USA, are also available. As educated consumers and good citizens, we can benefit ourselves and each other by embracing these products along with our REAL trees.

See [http://www.oldsummit.com/index.php?main\\_page=page&id=6](http://www.oldsummit.com/index.php?main_page=page&id=6) for details