



\*\* This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/disposing-and-utilizing-christmas-trees-after-season>

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### **Once Christmas is over, what happens to the tree?**

Tips on how to dispose of and utilize Christmas trees at the end of the season

*K-State Research and Extension news service*

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Christmas trees bring Christmas glee, but they can bring even more than that once the holiday season is past, says Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini.

“An old Christmas tree can be used to benefit birds, fish and the landscape by placing it in a corner of your deck, and spreading some birdseed nearby, or tying it to a deciduous tree or post near a bird feeder,” she said.

Christmas trees can give birds an escape from hawks or cats and keep them protected from the wind chill on cool nights. Or, Domenghini said, a tree can improve fish habitat and fishing by sinking it into a pond.

“The tree serves as little coral reef, in that the branches provide substrate for water plants to grow, and cover for minnows and other forms of small aquatic life,” Domenghini said.

Domenghini said sinking a tree is simple: Tie a cinder block with a short, stout rope to the base of the tree and drop it in – with permission from the pond owner.

Christmas trees can also be allowed to dry and used as firewood. But, Domenghini cautions, “beware that most conifer species tend to spark and pop more than hardwoods, as resin pockets in the wood make tiny explosions.”

Another option, according to Domenghini: Many municipalities allow Christmas trees to be placed on the curb for pickup, then burned or ground for mulch.

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a [weekly Horticulture Newsletter](#) with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens.

Interested persons can subscribe to the newsletter, as well as send their garden and yard-related questions to [hortsupport@ksu.edu](mailto:hortsupport@ksu.edu), or contact your [local K-State Research and Extension office](#).

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**FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS:** Links used in this story  
K-State Horticulture Newsletter, <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

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