



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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State's official Christmas tree to arrive in Lansing Saturday

LANSING – A tree grows in Bergland – and that tree will soon take its place at the Capitol to serve as Michigan's official Christmas tree. The Michigan Department of Management and Budget, the Michigan Association of Timbermen and the Great Lakes Timber Professional Association will bring the 63-foot spruce to Lansing Saturday, Nov. 7, at 9 a.m.

For 65 years, the tree has grown in an Upper Peninsula neighborhood with streets named Pine, Willow, Cedar and, yes, Spruce. On Wednesday, it will be cut by the timbermen from the side lawn of Josh and Amanda Lopac, which is about 20 miles south of the Porcupine Mountains.

"The lighting of our state's Christmas tree has become a wonderful family tradition," said Lisa Webb Sharpe, director of the Department of Management and Budget. "So many beautiful evergreens have stood watch outside the Capitol during the holidays."

Every year, DMB and the timbermen invite the public to nominate trees. The nominees must be a spruce or a fir that is about 65 feet tall and easily accessible from a road. They also must be available at no charge.

DMB's official Christmas tree crew has been watching this particular beauty for the past three years. While they had talked with the owners about a possible donation, the home had since been sold to the Lopacs, who graciously agreed to provide the tree for its prestigious holiday role.

The tree is officially lighted at Lansing's Silver Bells in the City celebration, which is set for Friday, Nov. 20, beginning at 5 p.m. The annual event attracts 120,000 participants and features an electric light parade, fireworks, performances and horse-drawn wagon rides. The event is free and open to the public.

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