

## 2009 CITY OF CHICAGO CHRISTMAS TREE FACTS



**LOCATION:** Richard J. Daley Center Plaza, Washington and Dearborn Streets

**HEIGHT:** 60 feet (The tree is 55 feet and the base is 5 feet)

**TREE:** Blue Spruce – this the first time since 1955 that the city has used one full tree. In 1956 the city began building the tree using a large number of small trees.

The tree was donated by the Weivoda Family of Palos Heights, Illinois: Carol, Harlan, Ian (15) and Kelsey (11).

**LIGHTS:** 7,000 red, green and white energy saving LED (light emitting diode) lights Provided by UL Underwriters Laboratories.

**ORNAMENTS:** Brightly lit star at the top of the tree.

**PRESENTED BY:** The Mayor's Office of Special Events, Underwriters Laboratories, The Brickman Group, the Weivoda Family of Orland Park, IL and the Bureau of Electricity.

## HISTORY

Chicago's first municipal Christmas tree was lit in 1913 on Christmas Eve by Mayor Carter H. Harrison in Grant Park. The tree was a 35 foot tall Douglas Spruce which was decorated with 600 multi-colored lights and topped with the Star of Bethlehem. In December 1956, the City's Christmas tree was in fact one large tree that had been created from many smaller trees. At that time, the tree was 70 feet tall, decorated with about 4,400 lights and more than 2,000 ornaments, and was located in the Grant Park tree platform at Congress Parkway and Michigan Avenue. The Tree Lighting Ceremony was moved to Civic Center Plaza, now known as Daley Center Plaza, in December 1966. In 1982 the location was changed to State Street and Wacker Drive, and was returned to Daley Plaza the following year. In 1991 the Mayor asked Streets and San to find a large single transplantable tree to be transplanted in a city park after the holidays. The largest they could find was 35ft. – deemed not large enough for the plaza open space – so CDOT and Streets & San constructed a smaller version using fewer greens – a total of 17 trees standing 50 feet. This is the first time since 1955 that the city has used one single tree.

## MEDIA CONTACT

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