



A Murray Christmas - The Magic of Murray's Tree Lighting Tradition

By Greg Bellon, Murray City Power Director

The holidays in Murray have always carried a special kind of magic. For decades, families have bundled up on a chilly evening to gather at City Hall for the annual tree lighting, an event proudly sponsored by Murray City Power and the Murray City Shade Tree and Beautification Commission.

The Tree Lighting is one of those simple traditions that brings our community together. Kids' faces light up as the switch is flipped, and the tree sparkles to life. Santa soon follows, greeting visitors young and old, as laughter and music fill the air.

Many longtime residents might remember when the Power Department would run an ad in the Murray Journal looking for a perfect tree to display at City Hall. Once selected, a forestry crew would carefully cut and transport the tree, often early on a quiet Sunday morning. Afterward, a permanent tree was planted on site, framed beautifully by the Wasatch Mountains.

Fast forward to today, and our celebration has grown right alongside our city. With a brand-new City Hall and a dazzling display of lights—now featuring more than five illuminated trees—there's no better place to soak up the holiday spirit. In 2023, the city added a festive 70-foot tree, a one-of-a-kind design inspired by public holiday celebrations in Spain. Since then, the city has continued to add new lights and decorations each year, transforming City Hall into one of the most festive destinations in the valley. Strolling the plaza, hot chocolate in hand, you can feel what makes Murray such a special place to live.

This year's event includes even more family fun. Alongside Santa's visit and the breathtaking light display, we're adding a Village complete with activities, s'mores stations, and free hot chocolate from the Murray Exchange Club. The Murray Museum will stay open late—until 8 p.m.—with new coloring pages featuring stories from Murray's history, all decked out in festive lights.

Our Murray Youth Community Council will host a toy drive. You are invited to bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to a child in need. As the Grinch would say, your heart just might grow a few sizes. Students from Hillcrest Jr. High will perform holiday favorites, and both Miss Murray and Little Miss Murray will join us in spreading cheer.

While you're downtown, visit the beautifully restored Murray Theater. On the east side of the building, you can see a mural in progress, created by students from the University of Utah's Department of Art & Art History. Their design, featuring a tree filled with people and birds, was voted on by the community earlier this fall and received wonderful feedback. The class will be painting the mural each Friday through December, transforming the wall into a lasting symbol of art and community pride.

Finally, don't miss a delightful new tradition taking shape: handmade candy windows decorating Murray Theater's State Street storefront. Inspired by the beloved holiday displays once featured at ZCMI and Macy's, these whimsical works of art are crafted from real candy, bringing nostalgia and sweetness to the season.

Please join us for the time-honored celebration of the Murray Tree Lighting:

Saturday, November 29, at 6:00 p.m.

Murray City Hall (10 E 4800 S)

This free, family-friendly event is one of the highlights of our season, and we can't wait to share it with you. Come for the lights, stay for the warmth, and be part of what makes Murray sparkle and shine.

Murray City Seeks Large Christmas Tree

Murray City is seeking a large spruce tree for use as the outdoor Christmas tree in front of City Hall. The tree must be a healthy spruce, at least 30 feet tall, 15 to 25 feet wide at the base, straight and symmetrical. Only trees located in Murray and the Salt Lake County area will be considered. All offers will be inspected and the best tree for the purpose will be chosen. In exchange for the donated tree, the Murray City Power's Forestry Division will remove the tree and grind the stump free of charge. If you are interested in donating a tree, please respond by November 1, 2010. Contact [REDACTED] for information regarding this offer.



Murray City's Christmas tree and the tree lighting ceremony are sponsored by Murray City Power and the Murray Shade Tree and Beautification Commission.



Murray City Power Senior Arborist John Johnson preparing selected Christmas tree for movement to Murray City Hall.