



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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To Tree, or not to Tree?

Michigan residents fake it!

LANSING, Mich. —More than half of Michigan voters – an astonishing 58 percent – will fake it this season with an artificial Christmas Tree. A mere 21 percent will be putting up real trees.

This according to the latest Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor survey of Michigan voters, which also revealed that 18 percent would not be decorating a tree at all this year. Included in that category are those individuals who do not celebrate Christmas, can't afford a tree or will be away during the holidays.

“The highest percentages of those putting up a real tree this holiday season come from the Upper Lower Peninsula (38 percent) and the Upper Peninsula (33 percent),” said Denno-Noor president Dennis Denno. “That’s not surprising, given that the bulk of the Christmas trees harvested in Michigan come from that part of the state. Meanwhile, only six percent of Detroit voters will be putting up real trees this year.”

“Michigan is one of the top suppliers of real Christmas trees in the country,” said John T. Reurink, president of Michigan Information & Research Service Inc. (*MIRS* newsletter). “Buying artificial trees may be good for retailers, but it is suppressing Michigan’s Christmas tree harvest.”

One reason for this may be cost. A real tree has to be purchased each year and, according to the National Christmas Tree Association’s website (www.christmastree.org), cost an average of \$41 in 2006. An artificial tree, which can be used for years, cost an average of \$68 in 2006.

“Who knows why folks are going plastic this year?” said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, CEO of The Rossman Group. “But it’s probably a combination of convenience (when was the last time you had to water a fake tree?), cost (an artificial tree amortizes in just 18 months) – and who doesn’t love the aroma of pine-scented plastic?”

Methodology: This survey was part of the Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. Six hundred respondents were surveyed between November 30 and December 3, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they intended on voting, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 2008 election. The margin of error is plus/minus 4 percent.