City of Birmingham
A Walkable Community

MEMORANDUM

Department of Public Services

DATE: **November 13, 2014**

TO: **Joseph A. Valentine, City Manager**

FROM: **Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services**

SUBJECT: **Staff Report – Holiday Tree Status Update**

As we have been reporting several updates throughout the year on the various modifications to the holiday tree, set up of the tree began today. As the strands of lights are being plugged in to each other end to end, staff is putting a waterproofing spray on each connection.

The number of outlets has been reduced considerably, from about 300 to now around 25 outlets. This will reduce the chances of water or moisture from getting into the wiring system, in turn keeping the tree lit longer during inclement weather. Due to the amount of lights added to the tree, in order to make these improvements, the power needs will exceed the existing 20 amp system. Another 20 amp circuit was necessary to light the entire tree properly. As a result, the tree will be plugged into two ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). This means the tree when lit will have two sections, the lower portion about five feet and the upper portion comprising the remainder of the tree or about thirty feet. If either of the GFCI's pop, only one of the sections will remain lit. If both pop, the entire tree will go out until such time as the components have dried out enough for the switches to be turned back on.

We have resolved many of the issues, but should we experience an outage due to the weather conditions, a contingency plan has been put in place. The Department of Public Services will handle all outages during the normal work hours and the Police Department will be available to assist after hours and/or on weekends. As soon as the connections have dried out the GFCI can be reset. Everyone is looking forward to another successful Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on Wednesday, November 26, 2014.