NORAD: How We Track Santa

For more than 50 years, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and its predecessor, have tracked Santa's flight using three high-tech systems- radar, satellites and Santa Cams.

NORAD starts tracking Santa using their advanced radar system called the North Warning System. This powerful radar system has 47 installations strung across Canada's North and Alaska. NORAD makes a point of checking the radar closely on Dec. 24 for indications that Santa has left the North Pole.

The moment the radar registers Santa's lift off, NORAD looks its second tracking system, the satellites, to continue tracking his flight. These satellites are located in a geo-synchronous orbit at 22,300 miles above the Earth, and have infrared sensors so they can detect heat. Since Rudolph's nose gives off an infrared signature, the satellites can detect Rudolph's bright red nose and follow Santa during flight.

The third tracking system is the SantaCam, a network of ultra-cool, high-tech, high-speed digital cameras that are pre-positioned at many places around the world. NORAD only uses these cameras once a year, on Dec. 24. The cameras are turned on about one hour before Santa enters a country then switched off after Santa and his reindeer are recorded. The network of cameras follows Santa and his reindeer on their journey around the world and the captured images are immediately downloaded to the NORAD tracking website [1] for all to see!

NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center

The NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center (NTSOC) opens on Dec. 24 at 5 a.m. EST (4 a.m. CST, 3 a.m. MST, and 2 a.m. PST) and remains open until 5 a.m. EST (4 a.m. CST, 3 a.m. MST, and 2 a.m. PST) on Dec. 25.

Located at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colo., the NTSOC receives up-to-the-minute status reports from NORAD radar, satellites and Santa cams.

Official Santa trackers are standing by to update everyone on Santa’s location— call or e-mail the NTSOC for Santa's current location.

Call: 1 877 HI-NORAD (1 877 446-6723)

E-mail: noradtrackssanta@outlook.com

http://www.noradsanta.org/en/track.html

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