

Tips to Reduce Waste During the Holiday Season

Waste Volumes Increase by 25% During Holidays

Partners for Environmental Progress estimates that Americans throw away 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day - approximately one million extra tons of trash per week. The following tips provide ideas to cut down on the amount of garbage generated during the holiday and ways to be a more environmentally-conscientious consumer.

Gift Giving Ideas

- Plan ahead. Making a list and checking it twice will save time, money and lastminute shopping frenzies.
- Give gifts of the "heart" — offer to babysit, wash the car, do house chores, run errands, make a "trash to treasure" gift, give baked goodies or make a charitable donation in a loved ones memory (see coupon).
- Start a savings account or give a savings bond for kids.
- Shop at an antique store, estate sale or a flea market.
- Give waste-less gifts — tickets or certificates for concerts, museums, sports events, massages or restaurants.
- Give durable products that will last.
- Need a stocking stuffer? Give packets of seeds. Plant indoors and transplant to the garden in spring.
- Bring your own durable cloth shopping bag to the store.
- Donate unwanted or unused gifts to charity or shelter such as leaveitforlove.org.
- Treasure hunts for oversized too-large-to-wrap packages can create a special sense of festivity and reduce waste.
- Check out SWANCC's Eco-Friendly Marketplace, a guide to eco-conscious products and services at swancc.org.

Cards

- Postmasters report that up to 20 percent of all mail is incorrectly addressed or otherwise undeliverable. Save time, money and resources by updating and paring down your list, and by sending e-mail wishes.
- Avoid cards with laminated, foil-stamped or metallic inks — look for cards printed with soy-based ink.
- Avoid foil-lined envelopes — they cannot be recycled.
- Look for a high post-consumer waste content for recycled paper greeting cards (100% if possible).

Parties

- Use reusable dishes, glassware, silverware and napkins for entertaining rather than disposable items.
- Give leftovers to guests to take home, put in containers and freeze for another time, or compost.
- Turn heat down - guests will warm the room naturally.

Gift Wrap

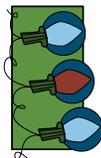
- Make your own personalized, festive gift wrap using materials from around the house or classroom (shopping bags, scraps of fabric, buttons, stencils, paint, etc.).
- Make your own gift tag from old cards or decorative paper, use pinking sheers for fancy edges.
- Decorate packages with your own stamps. Draw a design on a potato, sponge or cork, then cut the material away from the outside of the design. Press the design into paint or an inkpad and stamp away.
- Make shiny ribbon by cutting strips of potato chip bags.
- Reuse a container, bag or box that might have been thrown away to box a gift.
- Reuse packing cartons, bubble wrap and peanuts or donate to a shipping store, visit Green Pages at swancc.org.

Decorations

- Approximately 50 million Christmas trees are purchased each year in the U.S. Consider a potted tree for the yard, or a durable artificial tree to be reused for years to come.
- Recycle holiday lights and cords, details at swancc.org.
- Smaller bulbs use less wattage, which consume less energy and give off less heat.
- Make a nature ornaments from twigs, bark, pine cones, etc., or laminate a special photo for the tree.
- Tie old buttons on to a length of string to make old-fashioned looking garland.
- Make your own luminaries. Rinse out empty soup or coffee-type cans, remove the label and punch holes into the sides to make a snowflake design. Then place a candle in the bottom and light.
- Save some fresh evergreen needles in a dish and set it in your bathroom. Stir the needles to release aroma.
- Use dried-out tree sprigs as kindling for a cozy fire.

Additional Resources

- buynothingchristmas.org
- earth911.com
- storyofstuff.org
- use-less-stuff.com



PERSONAL GIFT CERTIFICATE

Presented To : _____

Good For: _____

From: _____

PERSONAL GIFT CERTIFICATE

Presented To : _____

Good For: _____

From: _____

PERSONAL GIFT CERTIFICATE

Presented To : _____

Good For: _____

From: _____