

Holiday Recycling

November 2013

Recycling for the Holidays

The holiday season is a perfect time to practice good environmental stewardship. Whenever possible, consider the environmental impact of your holiday merrymaking. Here are some ideas to help make the holidays a little more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

- Give gifts that require little or no packaging, such as the gift of your time (cooking, babysitting or gardening), a charitable donation or tickets to an event.
- Think “green” while shopping for the holidays. Try to buy items made with recycled content. Check product labels to determine an item’s recyclability and whether it is made from recycled materials.
- Remember to recycle cardboard boxes.
- Donate older toys that your children no longer use to charities.



- When you receive your fancy, new electronics, consider donating used electronics for reuse. Recycling electronics prevents valuable materials from going into the waste stream. Consumers now have many options to recycle or donate used electronics. Many computer, TV and cell phone manufacturers, as well as electronics retailers, offer some kind of take back program or sponsor recycling events
- When decorating, use Energy Star lighting such as LED outdoor holiday lights, which require 1/50th of the electricity of conventional lights, and last 20-30 years. Put lights on a timer or turn them on only when someone is home.

- When going shopping, bring reusable cloth bags or tell store clerks you don't need a bag for small or oversized purchases. Combine your purchases into one bag rather than getting a new bag at each store. Thousands of paper and plastic shopping bags end up in landfills every year.
- Avoid using disposable dishes and utensils when entertaining friends and family, and if you must use them, buy items made from recycled or compostable material.
- Remember to place easily identifiable recycling and compost containers at your celebration so guests can recycle soda cans, bottles and paper products.
- When sending or giving cards or stationery, look for paper with the highest percentage of post-consumer recycled content.
- Use cool wrapping materials like maps, the Sunday comics, and posters. Remember to save ribbons, bows and bags to reuse next year.
- If you want to celebrate with a tree, consider a tree that can be replanted later. If you celebrate with a cut tree, after the holidays, look for ways to compost your tree instead of sending it to a landfill. Check with your community solid waste department to find out if a tree composting program exists in your area. Programs like these collect and mulch trees, which can then be used as compost or landscaping material.



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