



HOLIDAY WASTE REDUCTION

Recycling Advocates

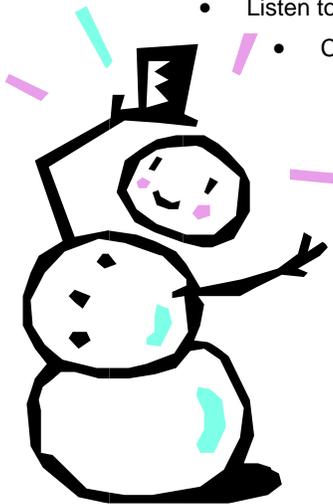
Holiday TREE

- Consider buying a potted Norfolk pine, fig tree or indoor house plant that can be used every holiday season as your evergreen tree.
- Decorate evergreen bushes or pine trees outside a window with removable, reusable decorations.
- Get a tree that can be planted or mulched afterward, or buy an artificial one that can be reused every year.
- Purchase a tree from a tree farm rather than cutting one down in the wild. Select a native species. Choose a farm that operates sustainably, and provides manual rather than chainsaw cutting. Consider distance to farm.
- Use trimmed branches from your tree for decorating around the home or making wreaths.
- If you bought a cut tree, remove all decorations, including tinsel and lights, and recycle it.

These holiday waste reductions ideas are brought to you by Recycling Advocates. Formed in 1987, Recycling Advocates is Oregon's only citizen-based, grassroots group dedicated to creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle. Check us out at www.RecyclingAdvocates.org

City/County programs as well as some local businesses or community groups will accept trees for recycling. For more information:

- Check your local paper
 - Listen to the radio.
 - Call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000 or view their website at www.metro-region.org



TREE ORNAMENTS & DECORATIONS

Use what you already have!

- Memorabilia, such as a child's first shoe or grandma's hankie scented with perfume.
- An old full skirt as a tree skirt.
- Old jewelry (re-string old necklaces, hang earrings or bracelets).
- Items collected on vacation.
- Small stuffed animals and toys.
- Miniature toy cars.
- Dressed-up doll as a tree-topper.

Make your own decorations

- Make tree ornaments out of old holiday cards, things you already have around the house, or from materials found in the backyard: twigs, bark, flowers and herbs, pine cones, etc.
- SCRAP is an excellent resource for affordable materials. 3901 A N. Williams, Portland. 503-294-0769. www.SCRAPAction.org
- Edible cookie ornaments: use gingerbread or sugar cookie dough; poke a hole at the tip using a drinking straw; decorate and bake; thread a ribbon through hole; tie ribbon in a large loop and hang on bough of tree.
- Small pictures from old magazines or holiday cards: cut out; glue onto old plastic lid; decorate with beads, buttons or jewelry; punch a hole and hang with string or yam.



- Popcorn and cranberry strings (can be eaten by animals after the holidays).
- Spices from the kitchen instead of commercially prepared and packaged products or aerosols (for example, create pomander balls by placing whole cloves in oranges or lemons to create decorations that look and smell great).
- Gingerbread people and reindeer from leftover brown paper grocery bags (place on windows and walls for decoration.)
- Tin can luminary (punch holes into empty metal can; place candle inside.)
- Buttons knotted on a sturdy length of string.
- Reusable glass icicles instead of disposable tinsel (keeps tree clean for mulching).
- If your decoration requires batteries, use rechargeable batteries. Check out www.greenbatteries.com

Lights

- Get outdoor light strands that are wired in parallel. These have separate circuitry so that if one bulb blows out the rest will keep shining; all you have to do is replace the bulb. Those strands sold with series wiring stand or fall together, making it almost impossible to find and replace a single blown-out bulb.
- Remember, the smaller the bulbs, the lower the wattage. Low wattage has two advantages: it consumes less energy and gives off less heat, making your lights safer.
- Holiday lighting is now available in LED format. They use extremely low wattage and are quite festive.

PARTY

Bring your own cloth bag when shopping, reuse paper/plastic bags, consolidate your purchases rather than getting a new bag at each store, etc.

Setting up

- Consider Evite or other electronic invitation systems to avoid sending paper.
- Use reusable tableware; if you don't have enough, ask to borrow reusable tableware from friends or family.
- Rent dishes, napkins, cups and saucers, tablecloths and glasses instead of using expensive disposables.
- Instead of buying placemats or table decorations, make your own. Cut old cards, magazines, or reused/recycled specialty paper into shapes and press between two pieces of clear contact paper.
- Cut up last year's holiday cards and use as place cards.
- Use outdated calendars taped together to make a unique New Year's tablecloth.
- Place easily identifiable recycling containers at your celebration so guests can recycle their pop cans, bottles, etc.

Food

- Buy in bulk or large volumes whenever possible.
- Send leftovers home with guests, save to eat later, or donate to food banks.
- Compost your food waste. Fruits and vegetables and their peels, pits and seeds are all perfect for composting - a great natural fertilizer.
- Practice portion control ... here are some suggested holiday portions: Eggnog – 1/2 cup, Turkey - 12-14 pounds (up to 10 people), Stuffing – 1/4 pound, Sweet Potato Casserole – 1/4 pound, Green Beans – 1/4 pound, Cranberry relish - 3 tablespoons, Pumpkin Pie – 1/8 of a 9" pie

Save energy

- Celebrate close to home for the holidays and reduce the amount of gas used during a heavy travel time.
- Walk or bike to neighborhood parties, or carpool (with a designated driver!) with friends if it's too far to walk, or use mass transit.
- Turn down the heat before the guests arrive, their body heat will help warm the room.
- Use pine cone "fire starters"
 - Melt old colored candle stubs, dip pine cones in hot wax and place on a piece of wax paper.
 - Fill muffin tins half full with hot wax, place a wick on the side of the tin and dip wax coated pine cones into each tin. The wick will be anchored in the wax and attached securely to the pine cone.
 - Cool in freezer five to 10 minutes.
 - Turn upside down and cones should fall out.
 - To use, just place under wood and light.
- Rent seldom worn party clothes or buy them from consignment shops.
- Faster film speeds, such as 400 or 800, reduce the use of flash and extend battery life.
- Bring your own camera instead of using disposable cameras to capture holiday memories.
- Point out the ways your party demonstrates waste reduction and recycling, if it is not your party, encourage your host or hostess to reuse and recycle bows, wrapping paper, cans,



Gifts

Practice sustainability

- Look for gifts that are unpackaged or minimally packaged, without unnecessary plastic wrap or cardboard backing.
- Buy from local and independent businesses
- Plan shopping in advance to reduce the amount of trips you will need to take and avoid the last minute frenzy shopping.
- Bring your own cloth bag when shopping, reuse paper/plastic bags, consolidate your purchases rather than getting a new bag at each store, etc.
- When buying gifts you will send by mail, pick items that are easy to ship and won't require excess packaging.
- Evaluate the gift for simplicity, durability, and long-term warranties.
- Sign up to stop junk mail, ask to be taken off the mailing list from catalogs you do not want, etc.
- Consider the impact of your gift: Is it environmentally friendly and safe for children? Will it be reusable? Is it recyclable or made from recycled materials?
- Buy rechargeable batteries for yourself as well as with battery operated presents, especially for kids. Check out www.greenbatteries.com
- Long distance minutes make an excellent gift that will always be appreciated.



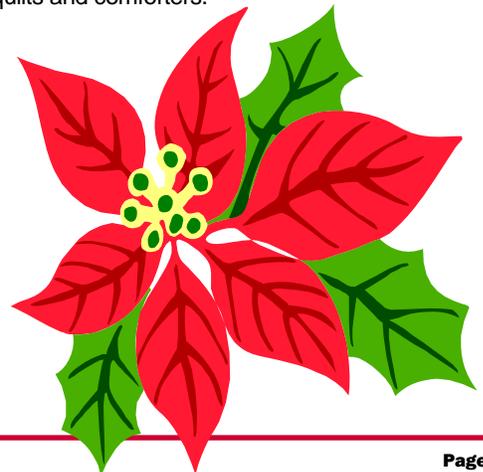
Encourage sustainability

- A book about making crafts from reusable items or a cookbook for leftovers.
- The Chinook Book encourages doing business at sustainable companies.
- Give a garden! Seeds, gloves, tools, etc.
- New parents? How about diaper service for a month?
- Reusable items such as tote bags, a lunch sac, coffee cup, food storage containers, cloth napkins and rings, pens/pencils, etc.
- Stationery - made from recycled paper, of course - and stamps.
- 100% cotton dish towels or sheets; look for unbleached cotton.
- House plant.
- Bird feeder and seed.

- Compost bin or recycling containers.
- Automatic thermostat control device (automatically turns down heat at night).
- Water-saving showerhead
- Shutoff-timer for watering the lawn.
- Energy-saving fluorescent light fixture or bulb. (Compact fluorescent bulbs last longer and use about 1/4 to 1/3 of the energy of an incandescent bulb. Substituting a compact fluorescent light for a traditional bulb will keep a half-ton of CO2 out of the atmosphere over the life of the bulb.)
- Gift basket or canvas shopping bag filled with non-toxic household cleaners (try local co-ops or environmental stores for gift ideas).
- A subscription to a favorite environmental magazine.

Be creative!

- Give homemade food or something you've made yourself from reused items.
- Give an experience (for example, a ride in a hot air balloon, day trip on a train, or skydiving).
- Create a family recipe book.
- Search the attic for old family photos and mementos and give them to your favorite relative wrapped in grandma's old hat and a lace curtain.
- Instead of piling up unwanted gifts under the tree, give tickets to concerts, museums, or sporting events, gift certificates, house plants, gifts of your own time, or simply make a donation in his or her name to a favorite charity.
- Give a membership to a museum or nonprofit organization.
- Personalized "coupons," such as a night off from dish duty, a foot massage, babysitting, house cleaning, gourmet dinner, teaching a skill (i.e. gardening, photography, financial planning, music, foreign language, sports, knitting, furniture building), etc.
- An old tricycle, bicycle, rocking chair, etc., fixed up to pass along as an heirloom.
- Homemade quilts and comforters.





Especially for kids!

- Old clothes and jewelry make a great dress-up box.
- Tools and gadgets make a great idea box for a young inventor.
- Use leftover dry-cleaner cardboard to cut out the various parts of a house, (walls, roof, chimney, etc.). The child can assemble the house and decorate it with the materials in the box.
- Create a child's play kit from whatnots found around the house.
- Arts and craft supplies paired with a related activity book (see SCRAP reference above).

- Glue used comic book pictures, or playing cards from an incomplete deck to an old box. Fill the box with basic creative equipment: scissors, glue, tape, crayons, and colorful paper scraps. Search the house for unmatched treasures: bent cookie cutters, old game tokens, fabric scraps, ribbon, yarn, and so on.
- Buy durable wooden toys.
- Start a savings account or give stocks or bonds. It's fun to watch money grow and it teaches children the value of financial conservation.

Know the store's return policy and include tags or receipts for easier exchange or return.

WRAPPING

Create your own!

- Decorate a brown paper bag using stencils, drawings, paint, stamps, or pictures (i.e. from holiday cards, magazines, artwork, etc.).
- Wrap gifts in old maps, blueprints, newspapers, pages from a child's coloring book taped together, old sheet music, last year's holiday paper (press with a warm iron if wrinkled), wallpaper scraps, home-sewn cloth bags, fabric scraps, pictures or advertisements from magazines/catalogs, or in fancy holiday gift bags.
- Search the flea market, garage sales, and thrift stores for interesting old boxes that can be used as decorative packages.
- Create a "Hollywood box:" individually wrap or decorate the top and bottom of a box with a separate lid. Encourage the recipient to reuse the box.

Make the wrap a part of the gift

- Putting cookies in a flower pot, reusable tin box, or a kitchen container.
- Hiding jewelry in a new pair of gloves.
- Wrapping kitchen gifts in a dish towel or oven mitt.
- Use a colorful tablecloth to wrap dishes or dining room gifts.
- For a reader, wrap a book in a reusable canvas shopping sack.
- Wrap tools for a gardener in the pocket of an apron, planter, or bucket.
- Hang earrings, bracelets, or necklaces right on the Christmas tree, or put them inside or around an open ornament.
- Wrap presents in reusable materials such as a handkerchief, a fabric fragment, or a hat and close them with a decorative pin or ribbon.

- Instead of wrapping gifts for the kids, hide the presents, plant clues to where they're hidden and make the kids' search into a treasure hunt.
- Fabric gift bags can be purchased or made.
- When giving oversized gifts like bicycles or CD racks, instead of wrapping them in paper, just tie a bow around them.
- Make gift tags from last year's holiday cards.
- Purchase sturdier gift bags/boxes and use them again.
- Replace tissue paper with old lace or strips of paper shopping bags or used gift wrap.
- If you use traditional gift wrapping, always buy recycled-content wrapping paper.
- Recycle any boxes, wrapping, packing materials, etc. that cannot be reused.
- Save torn gift wrap to use for craft projects.
- Torn gift wrap can be used as packing material.





Bows and Ribbon

- Save and reuse bows/ribbons.
- Use leaves, holly or other greens from your garden or yard to decorate packages instead of ribbons.
- Use hair bows, ornaments, shoe laces, toys, old neckties, scarves, etc.
- Spices, such as bundled cinnamon sticks or cloves, in mesh cloth.
- Scrap fabric, lace, yarn, rickrack and seam tape.
- Combinations of beads and buttons.
- Dried or silk flowers.



CARDS

- Make your own cards using last year's cards, old wrapping paper, paper scraps, or recycled paper.
- Send e-greetings to family, friends and business associates who are on-line.
www.e-cards.com
www.bluemountain.com
www.wishawish.com
- Make a giant edible cookie holiday card; put on a personal greeting with icing.
- Save yourself time and money by updating and paring down your holiday mailing list, find other and more creative ways of honoring your acquaintances, friends, and family.
- If you send holiday cards, buy recycled-content cards and envelopes, or cards made from hemp.
- Postcards save paper, and can be made from old holiday cards.
- Calling is an alternative to sending cards.

Shipping

- Reuse packing cartons and shipping materials such as cardboard boxes, padded envelopes, peanuts, wood shavings, shredded newspaper, and bubble wrap.
- Stuff packing peanuts into the plastic bags from newspaper delivery to use as packing tubes. These are easy to use and easy to remove without the peanuts sticking to everything due to static electricity.
- Drop off extra packing peanuts at local private mailing centers. Call the Plastic Loosefill Council's Peanut Hotline at 1-800-828-2214 for the names of local businesses that reuse them. (Stores often offer discounts for returning packing materials like cartons and boxes.)
- Use brown paper grocery bags to wrap small-to-medium size boxes that have to be mailed.
- Torn gift wrap, butcher paper, unbuttered popcorn, biodegradable starch peanuts, or crumbled newspaper can be used for packing material.



RESOURCES

Waste reduction

www.ciwmb.ca.gov/PublicEd/Holidays

www.moea.state.mn.us/reduce/nowaste.cfm

EcoCycle - www.ecocycle.org/askeco-cycle/2005/1202.cfm

Metro - www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?ArticleID=2397

New American Dream - www.newdream.org/holiday/index.php

Shopping in or around Portland

Redirect Guide - www.redirectguide.com

Chinook Book - www.chinookbook.net

Metro - <http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleid=2382>

Green shopping online

www.newdream.org/buy

www.ecomall.com

www.greenshopping.com

www.greenhotels.com

www.realgoods.com

www.greenbatteries.com

Alternative gift fairs

Give Green Fair - www.givegreenfair.com

Bring Recycling's gift ideas - www.bringrecycling.org/newsletters/06fallnews.html

Recycling Information

Metro - 503-234-3000



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