

"Green" Holiday Tips

The holidays are a time of generosity and spending time with loved ones, but they can generate more than just joy. Gift wrap, packaging and party goods can add up

to truckloads of extra waste. Celebrate the environment throughout the holiday season with these tips.

Decking the Halls

- **Collect natural objects** to use as table centerpieces and other decorations.
- **Replace incandescent holiday lights** with energy-efficient LED lights.
- **Invest in an artificial tree** for future years. If you choose a real tree, look to recycle it when the season ends.



Be an Eco-Minded Host



- **Use locally sourced ingredients** when possible, and check your pantry for items you already have.
- **Set out recycling bins** when hosting events.
- **Entertain with reusable dishes**, utensils and cloth napkins instead of disposable items. If you must use disposable items, choose paper over plastic.

Gift with Purpose

- **Consider non-traditional gifts** such as baked goods, plants, fishing licenses or gift certificates to local businesses, or check local markets for specialty foods or local art.
- **Donate** to a charitable organization in your loved one's name.
- **Give "time."** Help with chores, take children on an outing, or share your talent.



Upgrading to the Latest Tech

- If giving appliances or electronics, **look for the Energy Star certification label**.
- **Buy rechargeable batteries** and a battery charger to accompany electronic gifts.
- **Find an electronic recycling program** for devices that are being replaced.



Wrapping Gifts

- **Reuse paper items** for wrappings, like brown paper bags or newspaper, or look for wrapping paper that is made from recycled content. Invite little ones to personalize with stamps, stickers or drawings.
- **Make the wrapping part of the gift.** Options include baking tins, planting pots or new towels.
- **Avoid wrapping** and top with a bow instead.



Before You Toss

- **Save gift bags**, ribbons, bows, boxes and packaging materials to use next year. If you can't keep it, find out what may be recyclable.
- **Look up local tree recycling** programs that turn trees into chip mulch.
- **Find a new home for usable items** that have been replaced by donating them to a local charity.

