



## Pollution Prevention Tips for Holidays

### Trim the Trimmings!

"The ribbons! The wrappings! The tags! The tinsel! The trimmings! And the trappings!"

The Grinch was right about one thing – we do create a lot of trash during the holidays. Actually, we generate 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. This year, why not reduce the amount of trash your family generates, and recycle or reuse holiday items, such as gift boxes, ribbons and holiday cards. Make a commitment this year; give a present to the environment – something in Green!

### Holiday Cards

Over 2.65 billion holiday cards are sold each year in the US. The amount of cards could fill a football field 10 stories high. If we each sent one card less, we'd save 50,000 cubic yards of paper.

- Avoid purchasing "singing or musical" greeting cards - these cards contain button cell batteries, electronic, metal and plastic parts that usually ends up in the landfill. Button cell batteries contain **mercury** which is toxic to humans and wildlife and cannot be disposed of in the landfill.
- Send e-greetings to family, friends and business associates who are on-line.
- Collect your child's artwork throughout the year and use as a holiday card.
- Buy recycled-content cards and envelopes.
- Make gift tags from last year's holiday cards or send old cards to: [St. Jude's Ranch for Children, 100 St. Jude's Street, Boulder City, NV 89005-1615](http://St. Jude's Ranch for Children, 100 St. Jude's Street, Boulder City, NV 89005-1615).

### Gift Giving

- Make gifts. A home-cooked meal or baked goodies is often appreciated.
- Consider non-material gifts. Tickets to a sporting event, movie, play, or concert are a real treat. A night of free babysitting for family and friends.
- Make a charitable donation in someone's name. Try to find an organization that complements the gift receiver's interest, for example for a dog lover, give to the local animal shelter.
- Give practical gifts such as low flow showerheads and faucets, LED light bulbs or reusable shopping bags.
- Consider giving a used item.

### Gift Wrapping

During the holiday season alone, the average household generates three to ten bags of extra trash.

- Design your own gift-wrap by using paper grocery bags and add decorations such as drawings, stamped patterns, cut pictures from magazines, or last year's holiday cards.
- Get out the finger paints, markers, and crayons and let your children design their own wrapping paper.
- Purchase reusable gift bags, especially non-holiday bags that can be used later in the year.
- Hide large or hard to wrap gifts in the house or yard. Create a scavenger hunt to find the present.
- Use decorated boxes, add a bow and gift tag, and then reuse the boxes and bows next year.
- Set aside a box to collect the ribbons, bows and other package decorations for reuse.
- Wrap gifts in a gift. Use dishcloths or bandanas, holiday tins, and jewelry boxes.

### Reuse is Best

If every family reused just two feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet.

- Save boxes, bows and ribbons and use them again.
- Save packing "peanuts" or bring them to a mailing company such as Mail Box Etc.
- Use newspaper as packing, and then recycle the paper.
- Save cards to be used next year as gift tags.

### Recycle Those Trees

Approximately 37 million families celebrate the holidays with a real Christmas tree every year. Contact your local transfer/recycling center for details.

### Recycle Your Boxes and Wrapping Paper

- Once the gifts have been opened, be sure to recycle all of your gift-wrapping paper and boxes. Many communities offer wrapping paper and package recycling options. Contact your local recycling center for more information or look in the back of the Yellow Pages for additional local options. Boxes and paper represent a large and yet recyclable portion of your holiday waste stream.
- Set a box or bag aside to collect the wrappings and packaging. These recyclables can then be taken to the recycling center or curb.