

# Less Waste, More Fulfilling

## Tips to reduce holiday waste generation

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# Merry Reuse & Happy Recycling!

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Let's face it—with all of our buying, wrapping, packaging and celebrating, we generate lots of solid waste during the holiday season. But we can also reduce, reuse and recycle the remnants of our holiday cheer. Here are some tips to help!

### Tips for holiday shopping

- Bring your own reusable tote bag rather than accepting a separate bag for each purchase.
- Decline a bag for smaller items, or use the box the product came in.
- Choose products that are minimally packaged.

### Gift-giving

- Give experiences, not stuff. Consider gift certificates, movies, dining, classes, concerts, sporting events, etc.
- Give a personal service like snow-shoveling, running errands, etc.
- Make a donation in the name of a friend or family member to an organization that they support.
- Give eco-gifts, like reusable tote bags, a bike, energy- or water-saving devices, or bird feeders.
- Donate replaced appliances and clothes that still have a useful life.
- Don't use wrapping paper. Add bows to holiday shopping bags or gift boxes, or use the colorful comics from the Sunday paper.
- Give gifts in baskets, tins or jars. If you buy gift wrap, look for recycled paper with the highest post-consumer content you can find.

### Greeting cards

- Buy holiday cards made from recycled paper or make your own.
- Use postcards to eliminate envelopes and excess paper.
- Clip holiday cards to make gift tags for next year.

### Holiday decorations

- Save decorations for reuse.
- Donate decorations to local schools, churches, town offices or non-profit organizations.
- Use natural ornaments such as pine cones, shells, dried flowers, popcorn or berries.

### Recycle Christmas trees

- Chip and mulch them for compost or landscaping materials. For more holiday ideas, email us at [dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

**Debbie Jackson** oversees DEC's solid waste recycling program.