

## REUSE HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

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

## TIPS FOR MAIL ORDER SHOPPING

Ask mail-order companies who ship your holiday gifts not to use polystyrene packing "peanuts", but to use paper instead. Save bubblewrap or peanuts for reuse. Reuse those peanuts at businesses like Mail Boxes Etc. Tell them not to sell your name to other companies. After you have completed your mail shopping, remove your name from catalogue mailing lists.

## TIPS FOR GIFT GIVING

Be prudent and practical as well as thoughtful and creative. Purchase gifts that are long-lasting or that can be reused and later recycled. If an item has several layers of paper and plastic packaging, choose a similar product that leaves less waste. Purchase items made of natural materials like wood rather than plastic.

Better yet, choose items made from recycled materials. Second-hand or antique shops are great places to do holiday shopping.

Consider giving gift certificates or tickets for services or special events, rather than purchasing an item that may not be used or needed.



## TIPS FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES

Use cloth napkins, silverware, glass drinking cups and ceramic coffee mugs, and reusable plates rather than disposable plastic, styrofoam or paper at holiday parties. Rent party furnishings rather than buying things you will only use once a year. Reuse plastic margarine tubs or yogurt containers to store holiday leftovers.

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If you have any question about waste reduction, reuse or recycling, or any ideas to help reduce, reuse, recycle, compost or Buy Recycled, call the Bureau of Waste Reduction and Recycling at (518)402-8705.

Send us your ideas.  
We'd like to include them in future publications.

Write to:  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Solid & Hazardous Materials  
Bureau of Solid Waste, Reduction & Recycling  
625 Broadway  
Albany, New York 12233-7253

or email us at:  
dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us

and check out our web page at:  
[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8506.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8506.html)



New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,  
Compost & Buy Recycled



This Holiday Season!

Printed on 100% Post-Consumer  
Recycled Paper

The holiday season with its accompanying buying, wrapping and celebrating substantially increases the amount of solid waste we generate. However, there are many opportunities for the consumer to reduce, reuse and recycle the remnants of holiday cheer. Listed below are some tips for reducing your household's waste during the holiday season.

### TIPS FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING

When shopping, bring your own reusable tote bag rather than accepting a separate bag for each purchase (be sure to get your sales slip so you can verify your purchases). Say "I don't need a bag" for small purchases. Ask for the box the product came in or get a clothing box for the item instead of collecting both a box and a bag. Choose products that are minimally packaged.



### RECYCLE CHRISTMAS TREES

Some communities recycle Christmas trees -

chipping and mulching them for compost or landscaping materials. Trees must be free of tinsel, decorations, nails, tacks or other foreign materials. Check with your town office to see if a tree recycling program exists in your area. Recycle tree trunks for firewood or split for kindling. Use branches as mulch under acid-loving bushes and shrubs, such as rhododendrons or evergreens.



### COMPOST

Compost your kitchen food scraps from holiday dinners and parties. Remember compost fruit and vegetable wastes not meat or grease.



### BATTERIES

Nickel-cadmium, button batteries, small sealed lead-acid batteries and others are considered hazardous, please recycle them properly. Invest in rechargeable batteries.

### DONATE THINGS TO CHARITY



New gifts will often replace appliances and clothes that still have a useful life. Collect

these items and donate them to Goodwill, Salvation Army, local churches, day care centers, shelters or charity groups. See if your town has a "bargain barn" or "swap shop."

### RECYCLE CARDBOARD AND BOXES

The holiday season creates a tremendous amount of cardboard waste. Be sure to separate corrugated cardboard, bundle it and take it to your local recycling center. Check first if your local area accepts cardboard and how it should be prepared.



### REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE GIFT WRAP

Don't use wrapping paper. Just add bows to holiday shopping bags or gift boxes. Only use the amount of wrap that you need. Loop string around gift boxes, then lay it out on paper to determine how much to cut. Wrap gifts in brown paper bags or newspaper. Use the cartoon section for brighter colors. Wrap gifts in festive holiday fabric, dishtowels or bandannas, which can simply be washed and reused. Give gifts in baskets, tins or jars. Save bows, ribbons and paper to reuse next year. Shred used wrapping paper to use as filler or instead of tissue. Buy recycled gift wrap. Write recipients name on reusable wooden ornaments and use as a gift tag. If you buy gift wrap, look for recycled paper with the highest post-consumer content you can find.

### REUSE, RECYCLE and BUY RECYCLED GREETING CARDS

Buy holiday greeting cards made from recycled paper (don't forget to look for the highest post-consumer content you can find) or make your own. Use postcards to eliminate envelopes and excess paper. Clip holiday cards to make gift tags for next year. Jot down your favorite recipe on the back to include with a hostess gift.

### GET OFF THE CATALOG MAILING LIST

Check this website to reduce all those catalogs coming to your address - [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org)

Merry Reuse  
&  
Happy Recycling!