

It's easy to be green no matter what holiday it is— Here are some tips you can use all year long!

WASTE REDUCTION

- Send holiday e-cards instead of paper greeting cards or make sure the ones you buy have recycled content material.
- When shipping, reuse foam peanuts or other packaging materials.
- Use reusable grocery and shopping bags and make sure to recycle the non-reusable ones.
- Use rechargeable batteries for camera and flashlights.
- If you have several events or parties in a short amount of time buy food items in bulk. You will save a trip to the grocery and use less packaging!
- Eliminate using disposable plates, cups, napkins, and silverware. If you do buy disposable products look for ones with recycled content.
- Instead of buying new items (Ex. A dress for a party, more chairs, etc.) consider borrowing or renting things.
- Shop at thrift stores for unique gift items or holiday decorations.
- Compost your left over food—it's easy and a great fertilizer!
- Save all gift-wrapping and decorations to reuse later or wrap gifts in old maps, posters, sheet music, fabric scraps or wallpaper scraps.

RECYCLING

- Have clearly marked recycling containers.
- Cook holiday meals in recyclable and recycled content pans such as aluminum.
- If your holiday gifts include new electronic gadgets and you need to discard your older electronics, recycle them instead of throwing them away. [Contact our office or visit our website to find out how to recycle your electronics.](#)
- Recycle or properly dispose of all cooking grease. Do not put it down the drain.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

- Make sure to turn off or unplug holiday decorations when they are not in use.
- Be sure holiday decorations are not placed on or obstructing air vents.
- When cooking, use your microwave oven as much as possible or plan your oven baking to avoid continuously reheating the oven.

- Use LED holiday lights. They use about 99 percent less energy than larger, traditional holiday bulbs and last up to 100,000 hours when used indoors.
- Reduce your light display by one or two strands. You may not even notice the subtle change.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT IDEAS

- Give home-baked goodies in reusable containers like baskets, tins, or jars.
- Give non-materialistic "green" gifts that do not require wrapping, such as gift certificates for massages, to restaurants, cooking classes, sailing lessons, etc. Theater, sporting event, concert or movie tickets are always appreciated. Experiences are remembered after presents wear out.
- Give a gift of time or talent. Make gift certificates for a special dinner, pet sitting or house cleaning. Offer your talents at gardening, photography or financial planning — or better yet, teach someone a skill you possess such as knitting, woodworking or playing an instrument.
- Make a charitable donation in the recipient's name or give a membership to a museum, environmental or other nonprofit organization.
- Give fair trade coffee and teas or local and organic fruit and vegetable baskets.
- Give a compost bin, can crusher, water timer, programmable thermostat, rain barrel, house plant, bird feeder, light timers, or bat house.
- When gift giving think durable. Consider how long the item will last before you make a purchase.

WATER CONSERVATION

- Defrost frozen items in the refrigerator, not under running water.
- Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher.
- When washing dishes keep washing soap usage to a minimum. It helps reduce the amount of rinse water needed.
- Don't run the kitchen faucet continuously while washing dishes.
- Let pots and pans soak instead of letting the water run while you clean them.
- Minimize the number of dishes used at holiday parties.

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