

Have a Green Holiday!

It is estimated that between Thanksgiving and the New Year an extra million tons of waste are generated nationwide each week. In fact, 38,000 miles of ribbon alone is thrown out each year—enough to tie a bow around the Earth! To help residents be green and earth friendly during the holiday season, Rainbow Disposal offers some holiday tips.

What can I do to help the environment during the holidays?

- Before opening all those gaily wrapped packages, here are a few hints to get you through the mountains of ribbon, stuffing, and wrapping.
 - Set a box aside to collect the reusable ribbons, bows, and other package decorations.
 - Most gifts boxes can be flattened and reused throughout the year for other items. Recycle boxes that can't be reused.
 - With all the excitement, people usually tear through the gift wrap, so set aside a large box or bag to collect the torn gift wrap. If there are large uncrumpled pieces of wrap, consider using those pieces for wrapping future gifts.
 - Drop off extra packaging materials at local private mailing centers. Call the Plastic Loosefill Products Council (1-800-828-2214) for the names of local businesses that reuse them.
 - Put this year's Christmas cards away to cut up and use as gift tags for next year's gifts.
 - Got a new microwave, toaster, clock radio, toy, or coat? Consider giving away your old appliances, toys, games, or clothing to a local charity or thrift store.
 - Before you throw away or recycle all of those gift catalogs, take a minute to pick out the ones you don't want to receive anymore. Call their toll-free numbers now and ask to get off their list.
 - If you bought a live Christmas tree, be sure to plant it. Or consider donating it a local school or nursing home to plant on their grounds.
 - If you bought a cut tree, remove all decorations including tinsel and lights before recycling. Make sure it is cut into 6 ft. lengths.
- No-Waste Gift-Giving Ideas

Here are a few ideas and suggestions on how to have a wonderful, gift-giving holiday season and still be earth friendly.

- Not sure what to get someone? How about a gift certificate? That way, you know the gift will be kept.
- Make gifts. Everyone appreciates a home-cooked meal or baked goodies.

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- Consider nonmaterial gifts. Tickets to a sporting event, movie, play, or concert are a real treat! Or make a charitable donation in someone's name.
 - When you go shopping, bring your own reusable bags.
 - Think durable! Consider how long an item will last before you make a purchase. Often, a cheaper item will wear out long before its more durable equivalent.
 - And, always remember to look for items made with recycled content.
 - No-Waste Gift-Wrapping Ideas
 - Breaking the "gift-wrap" habit isn't easy, so here are simple ideas to get you started.
 - Design your own gift-wrap by using a paper grocery or department store bag and adding decorations such as drawings, stamped patterns, or pictures cut from magazines. Let the kids do the designing. It will keep them busy on stormy days.
 - Spruce up brown paper wrapping with pretty bows, which can be saved and used for many years.
 - Purchase sturdier gift bags (or save the ones that you receive) that can be used again for another present.
 - Or hide the large, unwieldy gift somewhere in the house or yard, and give the person a card with a clue, or a series of clue cards, to lead them to the present.
 - Start a tradition of Christmas stockings for each person. Little gifts can be put in the stocking without being wrapped. The stockings can be used year after year.
 - Some gifts come in decorated gift boxes. Just add a bow and a gift tag, and the present is ready to be displayed.
 - Wrap gifts in the funny pages or old posters.
- If you do use store bought wrapping paper, buy the kind with recycled content (the more postconsumer, the better).
- Here are some other creative no waste gift wrapping ideas! Wrap the gift in a drawstring bag and use an inexpensive luggage tag for the gift tag.
 - Decorate oversized gifts with just a bow that can be used again.
 - Put toy animals in a cowboy hat and wrap a cowboy scarf around it.
 - Use a jewelry box for some flea market 'jewels.'
 - Use a knit hat to wrap a small gift. Close the hat with a barrette or a decorative hat pin.
 - Games or toys for a child can go in a new backpack designed pillow case.
 - For a person who is handy, wrap a gift in a tool box.
 - Put blouses and other gifts in decorative hat boxes and tie with a hair ribbon.
 - For the sewing enthusiast, wrap a gift in a fabric remnant and tie it with a piece of lace or ribbon.
 - Any kitchen gift can be wrapped in a colorful dish towel. Kitchen utensils can pop out of an oven mitt.
 - Place home-baked cookies in a reusable tin box, a kitchen container, or a decorated oatmeal box.

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- Use a colorful tablecloth to wrap dishes or dining room gifts.
 - For a reader, wrap a book in a reusable canvas shopping sack.
- Wrap tools for a gardener in the pocket of an apron, planter, or bucket.
- Hang earrings, bracelets, or necklaces right on the Christmas tree, or put them inside or around an open ornament.
 - Search the flea market, garage sales, and thrift stores for interesting old boxes that can be used as decorative packages.
 - Search the attic for old family photos and mementos and give them to your favorite relative wrapped in grandma's old hat and a lace curtain.
 - More Waste Reduction with Wrapping, Packaging, Greeting Cards
 - Creative wrapping paper substitutes include used blueprint paper, the Sunday comics, or even the sports section for a sports enthusiast. Design your own wrapping paper using paper shopping bags: decorate them with paints, crayons, or markers.
 - Replace tissue paper with old lace or strips of paper shopping bags or used gift wrap.
 - If you use traditional gift wrapping, always buy recycled-content wrapping paper. If your store doesn't sell recycled-content wrapping paper, ask the manager to order it in the future.
 - If you send holiday cards, buy recycled-content cards and envelopes. Or make your own cards out of last year's cards and the wrapping paper you saved.
 - Shipping a gift? Reuse the foam peanuts from another package, or use unbuttered popcorn for packing.
 - Create a child's play kit from what-nots found around the house.
 - Glue used comic book pictures, or playing cards from an incomplete deck to an old box.
 - Fill the box with basic creative equipment: scissors, glue, tape, crayons, and colorful paper scraps.

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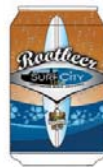
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- Search the house for unmatched treasures: bent cookie cutters, old game tokens, fabric scraps, ribbon, yarn, and so on.
- Use leftover dry-cleaner cardboard to cut out the various parts of a house, (walls, roof, chimney, etc.). The child can assemble the house and decorate it with the materials in the box.
- And don't forget to look for toys, books, and other products made from recycled materials!
- Reduce Holiday Hazardous Waste
- Your presents include personal electronics and talking furry friends? Be sure to stock up on rechargeable batteries and a charger, a great gift idea that keeps giving even after the holidays. Although they cost a bit more when you purchase them, rechargeable batteries can last for up to a year and can be recycled at the end of their useful life. Alkaline batteries, although less expensive than rechargeables, have a short life span and are not recyclable.

So You Received a New Computer, Cell Phone or Game From Santa – What do I do with the old ones?

Computer monitors, televisions and other electronic equipment should NOT be disposed of with regular garbage. Working TVs, monitors, computers and other consumer electronics can be sold or donated thereby prolonging their useful life. Nonfunctioning TVs, computer monitors and other obsolete electronics should be recycled.

You may bring obsolete electronic equipment to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center located at Rainbow Disposal, 17121 Nichols St., Huntington Beach, CA. The HHWCC is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm (closed on major holidays and on rainy days). Enter using Gate 6. Or go to <http://www.rainbowdisposal.com> to find out more information.



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