



Reducing Your Waste During the Holidays

Did you know that much of the 28 billion pounds of edible food thrown away each year is wasted during the holiday season? Don't believe it? Well consider this - if every American throws away just one bite of turkey with gravy, eight million pounds of food is wasted. One uneaten tablespoon of mashed potatoes per person would add 16 million pounds. Add on one discarded spoonful of cranberry sauce and you have another 14 million pounds. Here are some tips to help reduce the amount of waste you generate during the holiday season.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
November 25, 2008 – January 1, 2009		25 Lower the thermostat before you start cooking and the crowd arrives. Everyone will be more comfortable.	26 The mesh bags that onions and potatoes came in make great scouring pads when tied in a knot!	27 During the Thanksgiving meal, keep your portions small. If you're still hungry, just ask for more.	28 Send guests home with some leftovers. Reuse paper and plastic bags and plastic containers.	29 Save vegetable peels, coffee grounds and egg shells for compost bins.
30 Be selective when making out your holiday card list. You probably have a few different cards left over from previous years. Send these to new people on your list.	1 Purchase products in bulk and buy those that use less packaging. Replacing a cardboard box for 12 packs of soda with plastic rings cuts waste by 92 percent!	2 Give a monetary donation to a local charity in someone else's name. Many people feel good knowing that they are helping someone out during the holidays.	3 When shopping for holiday presents look for items in reseal-able containers and bring your own bag. Paper, plastic and cloth are all fine.	4 Buy smart. Here are some realistic guidelines for what an average adult might consume: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eggnog - ½ cup • cheese - 2 oz. • ham, roast beef - 1/3 lb. • broccoli, potatoes - 1/3 lb. • pie - 1/8 	5 Plan the route for your shopping trip to include as many right turns as possible. Left turns require you to stop and idle while waiting for traffic to clear. Go during off-peak hours when traffic isn't as heavy.	6 Reuse packaging and shipping materials. Old newspaper makes excellent packing for long-distance gifts. Use paper grocery bags to wrap small- to medium-sized packages for mailing.
7 Use clove-studded oranges to freshen a room or make potpourri using dried flowers. A drop of vegetable or body oil will enhance the scent and keep it moist.	8 Give environmentally sound gifts such as terrariums, ecology education kits, bird feeders and subscriptions to environmental magazines.	9 Buy holiday cards made from recycled paper or make your own creative cards on recycled paper.	10 Buy outdoor light strands that are wired in parallel. If one bulb goes bad, the others still work so you won't be throwing away "bad" strands.	11 LED bulbs have lower wattage, which means they use less electricity and give off less heat - a definite safety plus around the tree.	12 Decorate outdoor areas with strings of popcorn, cranberries, fruit wedges, cookies and suet balls and watch the birds enjoy your hospitality.	13 Make wreaths with dried flowers, pine cones and similar items instead of using store-bought decorations.

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14 Make gifts out of things you already have around the house or give cookies or food gifts.	15 Wrap gifts in old maps, newspapers, Sunday comics or kids' artwork.	16 50 million Christmas trees are purchased each year. Get a tree that can be mulched or planted or better yet, buy an artificial one.	17. Give gifts in reusable bags.	18 Buy rechargeable batteries for toys or other items that are used frequently.	19 Think about what people really need when giving gifts. Try giving gift cards to a grocery store or gas station or make a donation to their favorite charity.	20 Instead of wrapping gifts, have a treasure hunt. Plant clues to where presents are hidden and have the kids search for them.
21 Buy top quality products as gifts. In the long run, you'll save money and reduce the amount of obsolete junk that you throw away.	22 When staying in hotels, set up a schedule with the hotel to wash sheets and towels. They don't really need to be changed every day. If you do open the toiletries provided at the hotel, keep them in your travel kit for times when you forget your own.	23 Use those extra tins you've been saving for gift boxes. Reuse gift bags you receive.	24 Make sure that Santa and his reindeer eat the cookies and carrots that your kids leave out.	25 The best things in life are free. Give your family the gifts of time and love instead of something bought from the store.	26 Reduce unwanted mailings and duplicate catalogs by calling the toll-free number listed on the order form in the catalog.	27 To have your name removed from mailing lists, contact Mail Preference Service, P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735.
28 Put your lights on timers to save energy and provide peace of mind while you're away from home.	29 Drop off extra packaging materials at local private mailing centers. Call the Plastic Loosefill Products Council at 1-800-828-2214 for the names of local businesses that can use them.	30 Break down gift boxes and use them again.	31 Cut off the front of the cards you receive and reuse them as postcards or ornaments. Recycle the rest of the card and envelopes.	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! Make a commitment to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle all year.		