



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Holiday Waste Reduction Techniques Can Lead to a **Green** Holiday Season



RALEIGH - With the holiday season upon us, opportunities abound for North Carolinians to ensure that family celebrations are safe, happy and not harmful to the environment. During the five weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, the nation's trash increases by an extra one million tons per week. The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources offers the following tips to help consumers reduce waste while enjoying the merriment of the holiday season.

- Don't let the "Grease Goblin" spoil your holiday fun. To send him on his way: place excess amounts of oil and grease from holiday cooking and cleaning in collection containers, scrape oil and grease off of kitchen utensils and equipment, and keep grease out of wash water. **Never** pour oil and grease down the drain, and avoid using hot water to wash the grease away from substances.
- Avoid placing food scraps such as turkey bones, potato peels and celery down the drain. Potato peels swell when wet, blocking the drain, and celery strands can jam the blades of in-sink garbage disposals.
- Plan meals wisely and practice portion control. If faced with leftovers, place them in plastic containers or bags and send them home with guests or save them for later.
- Use decorative, reusable boxes and bags for gift giving instead of wrapping paper. If you must wrap, use comics, old calendars or fabric.
- Give "green" gifts that do not require wrapping, such as gift certificates or a charitable donation in the recipient's name.
- Recycle used ribbons, bows and decorative wrappings.
- Purchase rechargeable batteries.
- Get a tree that can be planted or mulched following the holiday season.
- Use reusable bags when shopping. Return plastic bags to stores for recycling.
- Decorate your tree with natural ornaments such as pinecones, flowers and dried fruits.
- Reduce waste and save money by purchasing larger rolls of film.
- Use reusable plates, cups and silverware instead of disposable ones.



For contact information to find out how specific municipalities across North Carolina handle solid waste issues, please visit www.p2pays.org/payt/ncwaste.asp. For additional information on recycling in North Carolina, please visit the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance Web site at www.p2pays.org, or contact Diana Kees, public information officer, (919) 715-6515/6500, diana.kees@ncmail.net.

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