



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, the Recycle Guys hope that North Carolinians will do their part to ensure that family celebrations are safe, happy and not harmful to the environment. Studies show that holiday preparations, including gift giving, holiday decorations and food preparation, increase the nation’s trash by an extra one million tons per week during the five weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day. The N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) offers the following tips to help consumers reduce waste and care for the environment while enjoying the merriment of the holiday season.

- Don’t let the “Grease Goblin” spoil your holiday fun. With deep-fried turkey fast becoming a Southern tradition, the proper disposal of deep-fryer oil is essential. Be sure to pour or scrape the oil into cans or bottles and apply lids. Then throw it away in your household garbage.
- 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. For more information on this topic, please visit the DPPEA’s Oil and Grease page at <http://www.p2pays.org/food/main/oil.htm>.
- 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.
- 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.
- Reduce waste and save money by purchasing larger rolls of film.
- Use reusable plates, cups and silverware instead of disposable ones.
- If a tree is part of your celebration, buy one that can be replanted in your yard. If you can’t replant your tree, compost it after the holidays along with wreaths and other live decorations. Contact your local recycling office (find yours at <http://www.p2pays.org/payt/ncwaste.asp>) to find out how.
- Use popcorn instead of foam peanuts when wrapping gifts and include a note explaining that birds can eat it.



For additional tips on reducing holiday waste, please visit DPPEA’s Web site at <http://www.p2pays.org> and click on “Battery Guy,” or contact Kim Fenton, waste reduction specialist, at (919) 715-6507/6500, kim.fenton@ncmail.net.

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