



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Contact: Chris Frazier
Phone: (919) 715-6515

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE “GREEN” HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

RALEIGH—The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources encourages North Carolinians to practice environmentally-friendly holiday habits this year.

By reducing waste and “going green,” you may be able to save some green in the process. Studies show 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.

“Now is the perfect time to implement some environmentally-friendly holiday ideas. Not only are people concerned about the economy, but the environment is also a hot topic,” said Kelley Dennings, environmental specialist with the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance. “Why not make a ‘green’ New Year’s resolution this year as well?”

Some environmentally-friendly and cost-saving ideas include:

- 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.
- Give a gift of time or talent. Take someone to a play, concert or movie. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Shop at thrift stores for unique gift items or holiday decorations.
- Save all gift-wrapping and decorations to reuse later or wrap gifts in old maps, posters, sheet music, fabric or wallpaper scraps.

Other environmentally-friendly ideas include:

- Give a compost bin, can crusher, water timer, programmable thermostat, rain barrel, house plant, bird feeder, light timers or bat house.
- Use reusable grocery and shopping bags and make sure to recycle the non-reusable ones.
- Try not to use disposable plates, cups, napkins and silverware. If you do buy disposable products look for ones with recycled content.
- 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.

For additional environmentally friendly holiday tips, please visit the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance Web site at: <http://p2pays.org/recycleguys/generalholidaywaste.html>.

Office of Public Affairs
Phone: (919) 715-4112
1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1601

Diana Kees, Communications Director
FAX (919) 715-5181
diana.kees@ncmail.net

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