

Reduce Your Holiday Waste

Let's all just take a moment to admit that we have a problem - holiday waste. The very nature of many of our Christmas traditions are wasteful to some degree - Christmas cards get sent, received, trashed; wrapping paper is torn away and trashed; bows, tape, paper bags; left-over turkey and mashed potatoes; cut trees - the list could go on and on.

It would be difficult to completely eliminate the excess "stuff" at Christmastime without also doing away with cherished traditions. But, we can be mindful of our wastefulness and reduce it with a few easy changes:

1. Carry your own re-useable shopping bags when you're out gift buying.
2. Plan gift giving in advance to avoid unnecessarily driving all over town.
3. Update your Christmas card list and only send a card to those who would truly love hearing from you.
4. Buy an artificial tree or get a real tree that can be planted after Christmas.
5. Send leftover food home with guests or donate excess food to food banks or shelters.
6. Purchase rechargeable batteries for electronic gifts.
7. Use energy efficient holiday lights - indoors and out.
8. Reuse wrapping paper, bags, bows whenever possible.
9. Reuse packaging boxes and materials when shipping gifts.
10. Vacation at home - save time, energy, gas and money plus help boost your local economy.

Reduce Your Holiday Waste from Chrystal Murphy at www.chrystalmurphy.com. For permission to use or reprint email cdmurphy727@yahoo.com.