



# Holiday Waste Reduction Tips

## From the City of Ann Arbor



### Holiday Cards

- Take holiday card fronts to the Scrap Box, 521 State Circle, Ann Arbor (734) 994-4420, to be reused for art projects.
- Donate card fronts to St. Jude's Children's Ranch where the children make new cards from old ones. Send cards directly to St. Jude's Card Recycling, 100 St. Jude St., P.O. Box 60100, Boulder City, NV 89006. Ford Motor Co. sometimes sponsors used card collection areas for St. Jude's at the January Auto Show.
- Place old cards and envelopes in your paper recycling bin as long as they do not contain glitter, metallic inks or foil paper.
- Reuse cards as postcards, placemats, gift tags and collages.
- Consider sending electronic cards via e-mail instead of using traditional cards. E-cards often are animated, have sound, and can be personalized.
- If purchasing new cards, make sure they contain post consumer recycled paper, which should be written on the back of the card.

### Gift Wrapping and Packaging



- Wrapping paper and boxes may be placed in recycling bins if they do not contain metallic inks or glitter. Remove ribbons. Tape, stamps, and plastic mailing labels on recyclable wrapping paper are acceptable in normal amounts.
- Avoid using plastic wrapping paper, tissue paper and padded envelopes, which are not recyclable. Take packing peanuts and clean Styrofoam to the Drop-Off Station, 2950 E. Ellsworth, (734) 971-7400, to be reused or recycled.
- Try reusing old newspapers, paper grocery bags and other paper to wrap gifts; then recycle after opened.
- Purchase bows, ribbons and gift bags that can be reused year after year. If each family reused just 2 feet of ribbon/year, we would save 38,000 miles' worth—enough to tie a bow around the entire planet! - *Use Less Stuff Report*
- Wrap gifts in reusable cloth, napkins, dishtowels or bandanas.



## Parties and Food



- Avoid disposable napkins, plates and cups, all of which are not recyclable.
- Prepare only as much food as needed. Over 100 pounds of food per person is wasted each year. Most guests will appreciate a holiday event that does not leave them feeling over-stuffed.
- Send leftover food home with guests in reused carryout trays, margarine tubs, etc.
- Decorate your home with natural items such as pinecones, greens, and holly.
- Select decorations that can be used year after year.

## Holiday Trees



- Evergreens free of wire, nails, ornaments, tinsel, plastic and stands are picked up on normal curbside collection days for a period following each holiday season to be composted. Check schedules each year to find out when this collection will occur.
- Properly prepared evergreens may be taken to the parking lot adjacent to the Drop Off Station at 2950 Ellsworth Road from mid-December throughout January for composting.
- Consider purchasing a live tree, which can be planted following the holiday season or use an indoor plant as a holiday tree.
- Artificial trees can last 10-20 years if protected and stored the rest of the year.

## Gift Giving

- Homemade food items create little waste and are much appreciated!
- Purchase rechargeable batteries for electronic toys & gadgets. When exhausted, these batteries can be recycled at most electronic stores. Check outlets at [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org).
- Gift certificates always 'fit.' Make your own certificates for special services, such as snow shoveling, preparing a homemade meal, etc.
- Donate unwanted gifts or duplicates to charities or resale shops.
- If participating in white elephant parties, reuse items rather than purchasing new gifts.

