

## YOUR GUIDE TO A GREENER HOLIDAY SEASON

*You can do your part to help us green this holiday season by trying a few of the following simple, earth-friendly ways to celebrate the holidays.*

### Gifts and Packaging

Americans generate 25% more waste during the holiday season, which results in an extra million tons of waste each week between Thanksgiving and New Years!

This holiday season remember to:

- Save the tissue paper, wrapping and ribbon you receive to decorate gifts throughout the coming year. Or, get creative and use old magazines, maps, old card fronts, or other types of reused paper to wrap gifts.
- Give your old cards and calendars a new life through RAFT, the Resource Area For Teachers.

### Food Waste/Party Planning

Every year, more than 28 billion pounds of food are thrown out in the U.S. To reduce the waste from your events, try the following:

- Reduce by practicing portion control: cook the amount of food you think you will need
- Use reusable tableware and cloth tablecloths and napkins
- Set up an area to recycle bottle and cans and get a Compost Bin ([www.recycleworks.org/compost](http://www.recycleworks.org/compost)) to compost your food scraps.

### Energy

Americans boost their electricity consumption by 27% between Thanksgiving and New Years. You can save energy and still celebrate the holidays in style by:

- Purchasing safer and energy-efficient LED light bulb strands
- Look for the ENERGY STAR® logo when purchasing large appliances, which can save the average household can save up to \$400 on annual utility bills.



### Electronics

Did you know that it is now illegal to throw your old electronics in the trash? As you plug in those new electronics, don't forget to recycle the old ones. For

information on what to do with your old computer, television, or cell phone, visit RecycleWorks at: [www.recycleworks.org/ewaste](http://www.recycleworks.org/ewaste).

## Household Batteries

Don't throw them in the trash! Take used batteries to a recycling facility because they contain corrosive or toxic substances. To find a battery collection center near you, search the RecycleWorks database at: <http://www.recycleworks.org/cgi-bin/bin/user/searchdatabases.pl>.

*To reduce your battery waste even more, use **rechargeable batteries** in place of disposables whenever possible.*

Note: If you give or receive cards that play music, be aware that they contain mercury and may not be put in the trash. Save them for your spring cleaning run to the County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program. For more information or to make an appointment (for San Mateo County residents), visit [www.smhealth.org/hhw](http://www.smhealth.org/hhw).

## Holiday Trees

Visit the Holiday Tree Recycling Guide at: <http://www.recycleworks.org/resident/treelist.html> for information on how to recycle your tree after the holidays.

For additional information about what you can do  
to green our county, visit the  
San Mateo County Green Team at

[www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/portal/site/greenportal](http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/portal/site/greenportal)