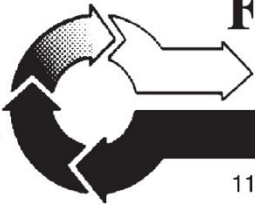


REDUCTION
RECYCLING
COMPOSTING
DISPOSAL



Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

117 Main Street., 2nd Floor, Greenfield, MA 01301 • (413) 772-2438 • Fax: (413) 772-3786
www.franklincountywastedistrict.org • info@franklincountywastedistrict.org

Reduce Trash this Holiday Season What to recycle, creatively reuse, and compost

During the holiday season, the average American family disposes of 25% more trash than they usually do (source: US EPA). Think about your household: could some of this trash be reduced, reused, recycled or composted? When residents reduce their holiday trash, they can save money on “Pay As You Throw” town trash stickers or bags, reduce carbon and methane emissions, and protect our environment.

Recycling Yes/No

The following paper items are on the “yes” list for household recycling, with certain exceptions: wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, and paper greeting cards/envelopes. Do not recycle these paper items if they contain metallic inks, glitter, or foil (for example, foil-lined envelopes). Tape and labels are okay. Remove batteries from singing greeting cards before recycling the card.

Other recyclable paper items include catalogs, calendars, paper shopping bags, and cardboard (corrugated and paperboard). Here’s a holiday tip: when opening or wrapping gifts, keep a paper bag handy to collect paper recyclables.

These items are on the “no” list for household recycling: ribbons, bows, tinsel, glossy photo cards, holiday light strings, Christmas tree netting, bubble wrap, paper envelopes lined with bubble wrap, packing peanuts, Styrofoam in any form, plastic shipping envelopes, or the molded plastic used to package toys, electronics, etc.

Some of these items, called “tangles,” are not acceptable in municipal recycling programs because they get wrapped around and tangled in the sorting equipment at recycling facilities: holiday light strings, power cords, and Christmas tree netting.

Recyclables from Franklin County towns are processed at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). For printable recycling guides, including a colorful yes/no holiday recycling guide, visit the MRF’s website (springfieldmrf.org) and click on “What’s Recyclable.”

Recycling Options for Other Materials

Holiday light strings and power cords are accepted for recycling at scrap metal dealers and in the scrap metal dumpsters at town transfer stations. In addition, mail-in programs are available at holidayleds.com and christmas-light-source.com.

“Pack and ship” stores, for example The UPS Store in Greenfield, accept clean, dry packing materials such as bubble wrap, packing peanuts, and inflatable “air pillow” packaging for reuse.

Plastic bag recycling programs at grocery and retail stores accept bubble wrap, plastic shipping envelopes (no paper), inflatable “air pillow” packaging, and other bags/films marked #2 or #4. A list of acceptable items is at: nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1.

Certain batteries (rechargeable, button, and lithium) are accepted for special recycling at transfer stations; place in a bag or container and hand to attendant.

When the holidays are over, check with your town about Christmas tree recycling. Your tree may be recycled as mulch this spring.

Creative Reuse

In addition to recycling, consider wrapping your gifts in reused materials. Gifts can be creatively wrapped in reused wrapping paper, old calendar pages, sheet music, maps or map book pages, paper bags, old posters, wallpaper scraps, fabric, scarves, newspaper, comics, or kids' artwork.

Gifts can be wrapped in cloth bags, reusable decorative tins, reusable shopping bags, or baskets. Or make the wrapping part of the gift; for example, a kitchen towel or oven mitt to hold kitchen utensils or gadgets, or a book wrapped in a scarf.

Wrapped gifts can be tied up with twine and adorned with natural items such as pinecones, pine or holly branches, shells, or buttons. Last year's holiday cards can be cut up to reuse as beautiful gift cards.

One of the most important steps for reusing materials is unwrapping gifts carefully and saving gift wrap, gift boxes, ribbons, bows and gift bags for reuse next year.

For a fun craft activity with kids, this online tutorial from Tori Avey shows how to make beautiful Hanukkah gift wrap with homemade potato stamps:

toriavey.com/homemade-hanukkah-wrapping-paper/ Grab some reused paper bags, a couple of potatoes, and some acrylic paint or stamp pads. Cut bag along the side and bottom to make one big sheet. Cut the potatoes in half and (adults) carve your favorite holiday shapes into the flat potato surface or use cookie cutters to press shapes into ½ inch potato slices. When you are all done, you can cut off the painted parts of the potato and compost the rest!



Image used with permission from toriavey.com

Compost

Another way to reduce holiday trash is to compost food and paper waste generated from holiday meals. Food scraps might seem small, but they add up: waste characterization studies performed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) show that 22% of the residential trash in Massachusetts is food waste.

Municipal transfer station compost programs accept all types of solid food waste, including meat, bones, cheese, plus paper waste such as paper napkins, paper towels, and more. Unacceptable items include liquids, foil, metal, glass, and plastic. These programs accept compostable material are free of charge, but transfer stations may require access permits or entrance fees). The following transfer stations in Franklin County have compost programs: Bernardston, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Greenfield (open to non-residents for a \$5 host fee), Leverett, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Shelburne, Warwick, Wendell, and Whately.

The Solid Waste District sells discounted "Earth Machine" home compost bins and compost pails to District residents. Pricing is \$25 or \$65 depending on the resident's town. It is not recommended to put meat, bones, dairy in home compost bins. For more details and pricing, contact the solid waste district or see: franklincountywastedistrict.org/Composting

For more information, contact Franklin County Solid Waste Management District: (413) 772-2438, info@franklincountywastedistrict.org; or visit franklincountywastedistrict.org. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).