



## **HOLIDAY ECO-TIPS**

The gift giving demands an increased volume of consumable material including wrapping paper, decorations, clothes and other gifts. According to the CDC, trash volumes increase by 25% between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve in the United States. You can do your part to reduce waste and save money this holiday season by trying these sustainable alternatives.

### **GIVING GIFTS**

- Get creative and make your own gifts
- Give the gift of your time or skills by offering to clean or create something for a loved one
- Buy gifts that give back to your community such as tickets to the local theater or gift certificates to small businesses
- Donate to a charity or nonprofit organization in the name of a friend or relative
- Send e-cards instead of paper cards
- Call people to greet them instead of sending a card
- Use reusable batteries
- Use creative materials for gift wrap such as newspaper, advertisements or fabric

### **DECORATIONS**

- Make your own wreath and garland with natural materials from your backyard
- Instead of using string lights to decorate, make strings of popcorn, cranberries or other recycled material
- Host an ornament swap with friends

#### **Tree**

- Buy a live tree and plant it outside or keep as a houseplant after the holiday season
- Dispose your tree at a chipping facility and recycle your tree into mulch
- Consider decorating your tree with natural or recycled materials

#### **Lights**

- Consider using little to no lighting in your decorating
- Use energy efficient LED lights
- Plug your decorative lights into a timer to save electricity

### **TRAVEL**

- Turn down thermostats down while you are away
- Carpool while shopping and travelling to other holiday festivities
- Buy carbon offsets to reduce your carbon footprint from long distance travels
- Shop online to save gas
- Run several errands in one trip to conserve gas

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*Saving nature in your backyard*

## ENTERTAINING

- Prepare festive dinners with locally grown produce
- Consider plant based proteins in addition to or in lieu of traditional holiday meats
- Use reusable china instead of disposable plates and silverware when hosting large parties
- Create a holiday atmosphere with soy candles, beeswax candles or cinnamon sticks instead of petroleum based, paraffin candles
- Send leftovers home in glass jars instead of plastic containers
- Donate excess food to food banks
- Make trash and recycling bins accessible to guests

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Vanderbilt University Sustainable Holiday Greening Guide](#)

[Sierra Club – Green Your Holiday Brochure](#)

[Terrapass: Buy Carbon Offsets to Reduce Carbon Footprint](#)