

RECYCLING IDEAS



CELEBRATE THE GREEN WAY -- During the holiday season -- Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa -- we create and leave behind a wake of trash. Consider implementing some of these ideas to help reduce, reuse and recycle this season.

Purchase living gifts such as houseplants, garden seeds or potted trees that can be transplanted in the spring.

Reuse holiday wrapping. Use old maps or pages from newspaper comics for wrapping gifts.

Put gifts in decorative tins or boxes instead of throw-away wrapping materials.

If your celebration calls for a Christmas tree, compensate for the harvest of your tree; arrange to plant a new tree in your yard or neighborhood next spring.

Give gifts that promote life style changes that are friendly to the environment. For example, cloth napkins and tablecloths, cloth or string shopping bags, a compost bin, recycling bins, reusable or biodegradable picnic plates/utensils, or stationary made from recycled paper.

Reduce waste by offering special food items or personal services as gifts. For example, bake cookies or prepare a meal a week for someone who would appreciate the help, run errands, shovel snow or shop for elderly family members or neighbors.

If everyone wrapped just three gifts in reused paper, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields. If every household reused just two feet of ribbon each year, the resulting 38,000 miles of ribbon could tie a bow around the Earth. 28 billion pounds of edible food is thrown away each year -- serve smaller portions; diners can always ask for seconds. The 2.65 billion Christmas cards sold each year in the U.S. could fill a football field 10 stories high or circle the planet 10 times. Annual trash from gift wrap and shopping bags total 4 million tons. Think about how you can reduce and help our environment.