



It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year... For Reducing, Reusing, Recycling, And Composting!



With the holidays upon us, many are bracing for increased trash, recycling, and composting. Gifts and gatherings can produce a lot of waste, as much as 25% more than usual, and WSWMD would like to assist in detangling the details of holiday waste do's and don'ts.

Buying locally usually reduces the amount of packaging associated with gifts (and helps out our small businesses!), but sometimes we hit the easy button. Clean paper and paper fiber-filled packaging is recyclable, while all Styrofoam, bubble wrap, and plastic film are unacceptable in our recycling program and cause major trouble in the recycling centers. Styrofoam should be trashed, but clean and dry plastic film can be dropped off at a large grocery store like Hannaford's, Price Chopper, Shaw's, Walmart, etc... for plastic film recycling destined to become plastic lumber (you've probably seen this on playgrounds or park benches).



Wrapping paper free of glitter or foil is recyclable - don't worry about that bit of tape, it will come out through the pulping process for paper recycling. Ribbons and bows are not recyclable but they are reusable. Gift bags can be reused and if they are non-glossy paper they can be recycled. Extra points for removing any plastic or fabric handles. Tissue paper is recyclable as long as it's glitter-free! Tissue paper, if glitter-free is recyclable. While many tags on the gifts we give and receive are made of paper or paper-like materials, they are usually too small for the recycling centers and regularly fall through the cracks of the system causing extra rubbish to clean up each shift. Unfortunately, tags should be trashed.



If you're ditching your natural holiday tree, consider donating it to someone with goats or sheep, add it to your yard to provide habitat for wildlife, or it can be dropped off at the WSWMD brush receptacle. Natural trees with decorations still hanging on will be landfilled. String lights are accepted at no charge at our scale house so that the wire can be recycled in a special program. Please do not throw these away or put them in the regular recycling container. If you're ready to part with your artificial tree, try giving it away or trash it. Artificial trees are not recyclable.

Entertaining is a big part of the spike in waste generation. From extra food waste to the disposable plates and cutlery we source to reduce time spent cleaning up - it all adds up. All food scraps can be composted, including meat, dairy, and bones when using WSWMD's composting program. If you are set on using disposable ware for your guests, use BPI compostable products. These can be found at most stores. Just look for the dark green BPI certification, and you can rest assured that it is safe to compost with WSWMD. However, please note that these certified compostable materials usually don't break down in backyard composting systems.



Please reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or comments, or just want to talk trash (or recycling or composting)!

WSWMD extends warm holiday wishes to all, from our family to yours!!

