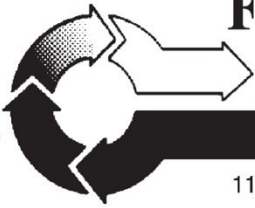


REDUCTION
RECYCLING
COMPOSTING
DISPOSAL



Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

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PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

Re: Holiday Recycling Guidelines
Contact: Amy Donovan, Program Director (amy@franklincountywastedistrict.org)
Date: December 2022

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 families 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

These items are on the “yes” list for household recycling: wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, and paper greeting cards/envelopes that do NOT 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 formed plastic used to package toys, electronics, etc.

Holiday light strings, power cords, and Christmas tree netting are not acceptable in municipal recycling programs because these “tangles” get wrapped around the sorting equipment at recycling facilities.

Recyclables from Franklin County towns are processed at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). For recycling guides, including a colorful yes/no holiday recycling guide, visit 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: plasticfilmrecycling.org.

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 that you already have at home. 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 pine or holly branches, pinecones, shells or buttons. Last year's holiday cards can be cut up to reuse as beautiful gift cards.

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 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!

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.



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: 28% of the residential trash in Massachusetts is compostable material such as food and paper waste. (Data from MassDEP's 2019 Waste Characterization Study: <https://tinyurl.com/2019WasteStudy>)

Municipal compost programs accept all types of 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 (access permit or entrance fee may be required). The following transfer stations in Franklin County have compost programs: Bernardston, Charlemont, 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 \$55 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).