



Christmas Recycling

Tips on how to recycle AND minimise waste this Christmas

Christmas Waste



Zero Waste Europe (2013)

Christmas may be *the most wonderful time of the year* but unfortunately it's also one of the toughest on the environment. Australians eat, drink, and splurge more than usual

during the Christmas season, and as a result, generate more waste and consume more resources. In fact, waste volumes increase by approximately 30% at Christmas, mainly consisting of food, shopping bags, product packaging and wrapping paper (Veolia 2012). Christmas is fast approaching so here are some tips to help you enjoy the holiday season whilst also reducing your environmental impact:

Christmas Cards

- Send cards via email to reduce paper waste.
- Purchase eco-friendly cards.
- Recycle received cards in the paper recycling bin or cut them up and make new cards or gift tags for reuse next year.

Christmas Decorations

- Donate old Christmas decorations to charity for reuse (e.g. The Red Cross, St Vincent's).
- Purchase LED Christmas lights as these are more energy efficient.

Christmas Trees

- Search for Christmas tree recycling options in your local area. City of Sydney offers a free mulching program for Christmas trees – collections need to be booked (City of Sydney 2015).
- Dispose Christmas trees by chopping them into small pieces and disposing it in your green organics bin.
- Make a naturally pine scented pot pourri by stripping the pine needles from the tree and placing them in an old stocking. Piney-fresh!

Gift Wrapping Paper

Most Christmas wrapping paper is not recyclable. Try to find wrapping paper made of recyclable material, re-use pre-loved wrapping paper, or use materials that can be recycled (e.g. newspaper).

Christmas Gifts

- Gift certificates, gifts of time or experiences such as dance classes or concert tickets are thoughtful presents and don't produce any packaging waste.
- Avoid or reduce online shopping. Although it is convenient, it also significantly increases the amount of packaging produced.
- Remember to repurpose or recycle packaging.



Daily Mail (2010)

Christmas Food

- Prevent food wastage by planning meals and realistically estimating the amount that will be eaten.
- But if there are leftovers, don't waste them! See [here](#) these tasty recipes to use up Christmas dinner leftovers including turkey, ham and trimmings.
- Food scraps can be placed in the compost bin or worm farm.

Christmas Drinks



Zero Waste SA (2014)

Celebrations tend to generate more food and drink packaging such as glass bottles, cans, tins, cardboard and cartons. Containers, cans and bottles can be recycled and cashed in for a rebate from 2017 (see our previous

Green Team's article about Container Deposit Scheme [here](#)). Rinse containers before recycling them to reduce any food contamination. Any excess recyclable items such as paper, glass, cans and food and drink cartons can be recycled at drop off locations. To find your nearest recycling drop off point and what they recycle visit '[Recycling Near You](#)'.

Batteries

Just got a new toy? Try rechargeable batteries! They are more environmentally friendly than regular batteries and can help save money too. Used batteries can be recycled – check [here](#) for your nearest recycler.

References

City of Sydney 2015, 'Christmas Tree Recycling', [ONLINE] Available at:

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/green-waste/christmas-tree-recycling>

Hirschhorn, U 2010, 'How much waste does a family generate over Christmas? One horrified mother lifts the lid', *Daily Mail Australia*, [ONLINE] Available at:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-504644/How-waste-does-family-generate-Christmas-One-horrified-mother-lifts-lid.html>

Harmony Enterprises Inc 2011, '10 Ideas to Recycle and Minimize Waste this Christmas', [ONLINE]

Available at: <http://harmony1.com/10-ways-to-recycle-minimize-waste-this-christmas-season/>

Good Food 2015, 'Christmas Leftover Recipes', [ONLINE] Available at:

<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/christmas-leftovers>

Planet Ark 2015, 'RecyclingNearYou', [ONLINE]

Available at: <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/>

Veolia 2012, 'Waste at Christmas Time', [ONLINE]

Available at: <http://www.veolia.com.au/blog/waste-at-christmas-time>

Zero Waste Europe 2013, 'Zero Waste Christmas – Rethinking consumption', [ONLINE] Available at:

<http://www.zerowasteurope.eu/2013/12/zero-waste-christmas-rethinking-consumption/>

Zero Waste South Australia 2014, '12 'wastes' of Christmas', [ONLINE] Available at:

<http://www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au/upload/at-home/fact-sheets-for-home-users/12%20wastes%20of%20Christmas.pdf>