

Holiday Waste Reduction Guide

Rethink -> Refuse -> Reduce -> Reuse -> Recycle -> Compost -> Landfill

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's, U.S. household waste jumps by 25%, adding 1 million extra tons to landfills. This year, let's rethink our gifts and celebrations to keep waste and emissions down. Here are simple ways to green your holidays:

- **Prioritize Experiences:** Give adventures, concert tickets, or cooking/dance classes to create lasting memories instead of adding clutter.
- **Time & Skills:** Offer babysitting, bike repair, or a home-cooked meal as a meaningful, waste-free gift.
- **Gift a Donation:** Contribute in their name to local nonprofits making a positive impact.
- **Shop Smart Online:** Avoid unnecessary purchases; consolidate orders and choose retailers with eco-friendly packaging.
- **Support Local:** Choose gifts from local artisans, small businesses, and seasonal markets.
- **Focus on Quality:** Opt for high-quality, practical gifts that last longer and reduce waste.

Did you know?
Knott Landfill
is expected to
reach capacity
by 2031.

- **Energy-Efficient Décor:** Use LED lights for decorations to save energy and enjoy a longer lifespan.
- **Thrift Store Treasures:** Find unique gifts at thrift and vintage shops, supporting reuse.
 - **Reusable Wrap:** Swap single-use paper for cloth bags or fabric wraps.
 - **DIY & Upcycled Gifts:** Handmade candles, baked goods, or art from repurposed materials add a personal touch.
 - **DIY Wrapping:** Repurpose old maps, sheet music, or artwork for creative gift wrap.
 - **Composting & Reusables:** Compost food scraps and use reusable dinnerware, cloth napkins, and containers to minimize plastic waste.



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Sometimes we are left with materials to dispose of. Here are simplified reuse and recycling tips:

- **String Lights:** Recycle for free at Deschutes Recycling in scrap metal or at any County Transfer Stations in the scrap metal bins. NOT accepted in commingle recycling carts.
- **Wrapping Paper:** Reuse if you can! If not, recycle curbside or at recycling centers - avoid metallic or glittery papers (dispose in the trash).
- **Gift Bags & Ribbons:** Save and reuse, or dispose in trash if needed.
- **Gift Tissue:** Reuse when possible. Recycle plain tissue, but dispose of any with glitter or metallics.
- **Clamshell Plastics:** Like those for berries, vegetables, bakery items. Not recyclable in commingle carts reuse for storage of miscellaneous items or dispose of in the trash.
- **Packing Peanuts:** Reuse or take to Pack Ship and More. Not accepted in commingle carts. Dispose of in trash.
- **Styrofoam:** Not recyclable in commingle carts. Can be recycled through Recycle Plus programs or at the waste haulers offices.
- **Holiday Trees:** Central Oregon Scouts will be collecting Christmas trees to support their annual fundraiser. You can chop and place your tree in your curbside yard debris cart. Christmas trees can also be dropped for free at Deschutes Recycling and County Transfer Stations, except Alfalfa, January 2 – January 31, 2026.



From making, shipping, and disposing of goods, Bend's consumption-based emissions (from imported goods, food, and energy) are nearly equal to all our local emissions combined. They total 1.2 million metric tons CO₂e, almost matching the 1.3 million metric tons CO₂e from vehicles, homes, and buildings. Waste disposal itself accounts for only about 2% of direct emissions, but the real climate impact happens upstream: during resource extraction, manufacturing, and transportation when we buy new things. Rethinking holiday giving helps protect our climate and limited landfill space.



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You can obtain this information in alternate formats such as Braille, electronic format, etc. Free language assistance services are also available. Please contact Megan Lee at mlee@bendoregon.gov or (541) 693-2161. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.



Servicios de asistencia lingüística e información sobre alojamiento para personas con discapacidad

Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto con Megan Lee en mlee@bendoregon.gov o (541) 693-2161. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1.