

# REDUCE YOUR WASTE this holiday season

## Follow these tips from the City's Solid Waste Management Division

### Food waste

- Food waste during the period between Halloween and New Year's Day is the highest of any time during the year.
- Before you prepare holiday meals, take a head count and adjust the amount of food accordingly to avoid waste.
- Be creative with leftovers. Encourage guests to bring take-home containers so they can keep enjoying the wonderful meal you've prepared.
- Please make sure you properly dispose of the grease generated by holiday meals so it doesn't create problems in the city's sewer lines. Never pour grease down the drain. Even if you run hot water down the line, the grease cools and solidifies as it moves through the sewer lines. Instead, pour liquid grease into a metal or glass container with a lid, such as an empty jar that you're throwing away anyway, and place in the trash. You can line your container by pouring cooled grease into a plastic bag. If you use a heat-resistant liner, such as a cooking bag or slow-cooker liner, the hot grease can go directly into the trash can. Containers that contain solid grease do not need a lid.
- Scrape food and grease from dishes and pans prior to washing. This type of waste also can be placed in the trash or composted as food waste. Use a basket or strainer in the sink to catch greasy food scraps.
- To learn more about the importance of "fat-free sewers," visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling).

### Wrapping paper waste

- Make the wrapping a part of the gift – for example, wrap a kitchen utensil in a new kitchen towel instead of paper.
- When shopping, consolidate purchases into one

big bag, rather than getting a new bag at each stop. Better yet, take your own reusable bag with you.

- Decorate brown paper sacks for use as wrapping by using rubber stamps, recycled Christmas cards, or drawings.
- Consider using paper that can easily be recycled, such as old comic sections, old maps, or children's artwork.
- Save gift bags, boxes, bows and ribbons for reuse next year.
- Recycle wrapping and packing materials. Paperboard (wrapping paper rolls and cardboard) is easily recycled at the city of Springfield's recycling centers. Christmas gift wrap is also accepted, however, plastic and foil are not. Call the city's recycling hotline at 864-1904 or visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling) for locations and hours of operation. Do not burn wrapping paper - the colored paper can contain lead and other heavy metals.
- Some Styrofoam packing materials can be recycled in several locations in Springfield. Call the recycling hotline or visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling) for information.

### Trees and decorations

- Burned-out Christmas lights can be recycled, and if Santa brought you a new computer or other electronic devices, you can safely recycle these as well. Please call the recycling hotline or visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling) for information.
- Recycle your live Christmas tree after the holiday season. Collected trees are used to create habitats for fish and wildlife, or mulch. Call the recycling hotline or visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling) for drop-off hours and locations.

For more information, visit [springfieldmo.gov/recycling](http://springfieldmo.gov/recycling) or call the Recycling Hotline at 864-1904.

