

Suggestions for a More Sustainable Holiday from the PSS Sustainable Living Committee

Holiday Dinners

- Consider a heritage breed turkey from a nearby farm or a free range turkey.
- Buy in season produce – root vegetables, squash (including pumpkin), broccoli, cranberries.
- Buy your produce at a local farmer's market.
- Don't waste food by cooking too much.
- Choose a natural centerpiece.
- Skip disposable dinnerware; use your fine china, utensils and cloth napkins.
- Avoid individual-serving beverages.
- Serve local water. Rather than bottled, use filtered tap water.
- Eat organic. This means less pollution and is safer for humans and farm workers.
- Compost food scraps.
- Run only full dishwasher loads during cleanup.
- Consider a meatless meal.
- Choose a local wine.

Gift Giving

- Select local gifts from nearby artisans or from consignment stores.
- Combine trips when shopping. Shop at a store that sells the majority of items you want.
- Don't always buy new — buy something vintage.
- Select a gift of quality vs. quantity for a longer lifespan.
- Select gifts made of sustainable materials, with minimal packaging — look for recycled packaging.
- Select a gift that teaches green — gardening book with gardening tools.
- Shop close to home or shop online. Recycle packaging.
- Give a gift that peaks a child's curiosity — like a zoo or museum membership.
- Give performance/event tickets.
- Give a gift in the name of a charity or adopt a gorilla, polar bear, elephant, etc., in someone's name.
- Make the gift yourself — pottery, metal working, craft, or canned or baked goods.
- Give socially conscious gifts — Ten Thousand Villages, West Side Bazaar, Global Exchange Fair Trade online store.
- Donate unwanted gifts or re-gift to friends and family if appropriate.
- Make the decision as a family that each person buys for only one other family member.
- Look for cornstarch peanuts, shredded paper, etc. to package gifts in; they can be composted.
- Choose battery-free toys or buy and use rechargeable batteries.
- Give a bicycle or bus pass subscription instead of a car.
- Give Amtrak travel instead of airfare.

Gift Wrapping

- Wrap gifts in recycled paper or newspaper — not all gift wrap is recyclable.
- Use tape sparingly or not at all. It doesn't recycle well.
- Use ribbon sparingly and reuse bows/ribbon for multiple years.
- Use leftover holiday cards for gift labels.
- Use reusable fabric gift wrapping instead of paper — be creative.

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Suggestions for a More Sustainable Holiday from the PSS Sustainable Living Committee

Holiday Tree Decisions and Decorations

- Choose a potted tree over a cut tree and then plant it after the holidays.
- Choose a cut tree over an artificial tree and have it mulched afterward.
- Replace burned-out bulbs rather than throwing out the string of lights.
- Invest in a bulb tester to make this easier.
- Choose durable and meaningful ornaments that last longer than the plastic or glass ones. Better yet, create your own ornaments!
- Create decorations from natural materials like pine boughs and cones.
- Stuff stockings with nuts, fruit and baked goods.
- Use holiday lights in moderation — don't over decorate.
- Use LED lights — they use a fraction of the electricity of conventional lights.
- Turn lights off at the end of the night or use a timer.
- Look for energy-efficient lights/decorations.

Greeting Cards

- Use e-cards instead.
- Use postcards rather than holiday cards.
- Look for greeting cards made of recycled paper.

Recycling tips

- Cookie tins can be recycled.
- Hard-to-open rigid plastic packaging can be recycled.
- Check with your town/city to see if it will recycle gift paper.
- Ribbon should not be put into recycling. Tape should be removed if possible.
- Compost scraps where appropriate — use a composter!
- Recycle your tree.
- Leave your tree in your backyard until spring as a haven for birds & small animals.

Getting to & from festivities

- Car pool!
- Choose rail over air whenever possible.
- Take Metro Bus and Metro Rail where available.
- Don't ride in Volkswagens. One VW pollutes as much as a city bus!

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