



Department of Public Works

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The City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works Offers Tips to Make the Holidays “Green”

The City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works (DPW) provides residents tips on how to reduce waste during the holiday season and answers frequently asked questions about how to properly dispose of a variety of seasonal items.

“Holiday season generally brings increased consumption and with it, increased discarding of old items and packaging,” said Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. “Being mindful of this, we can make choices to reduce waste and put discarded items to better purpose through reuse and recycling, and reduce what we send to the landfill.”

Waste reduction ideas:

- Choose reusable plates, cups, and utensils for holiday gatherings
- Make recycling easy for guests by placing and labeling a recycling receptacle next to your garbage can
- Use a reusable bag while shopping. Refuse plastic bags when not needed
- Get creative with wrapping. Reuse newspapers or paper grocery bags as gift wrap. Incorporate the wrapping into the gift, such as giving kitchen tools wrapped in a hand towel. Reuse gift bags and ribbons from previous years
- Purchase gift wrap and holiday cards made from post-consumer recycled paper
- Donate old toys and clothes to help another person and avoid sending them to the landfill

If every household in Milwaukee reused one yard of ribbon, the saved ribbon could stretch from Milwaukee to Green Bay.

Recycle holiday items:

- **Greeting cards and wrapping paper can be placed in the recycling bin or cart** as long as they are free of ribbons, foil, and other non-paper items
- Cardboard gift boxes and packaging can be flattened and recycled, or saved to be re-used
- **NOT RECYCLABLE: Gift bags, tissue paper, ribbons and bows.** Re-use them next year and save money and room in the landfill
- **Christmas lights DO NOT go in the recycling bin/cart.** To recycle, visit holidayleds.com/ or take them to a Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Strands of lights also can be placed in the garbage cart

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Christmas Trees

- **Artificial trees**, if not donated for reuse, must be thrown away as garbage
- **Real trees can be taken to one of the City's Self Help Drop Off Centers to be composted or mulched.** All decorations and lights must be removed first – the tree must be “naked”
- **Real trees can be placed at your regular garbage collection site** (alley or curb) for pick-up by DPW crews. Trees picked up by crews will be landfilled

Overflowing Recycling Carts

- Extra recyclables can be placed in a **clear, plastic bag and set next to the recycling cart.** Recyclables that fit in the cart should be loose in the cart and not in plastic bags
- **Flatten all boxes.** Extra, flat boxes can be leaned up against the cart or placed under the cart
- Alternative: Bring extra recyclables to a City Self Help Drop Off Center
- For recycling routes that do not have guaranteed collection during the winter, visit the DPW website for a projected date for the next collection: milwaukee.gov/services/garbage_day

Drop Off Centers

For information on the City's Drop Off Centers (hours, locations, what is acceptable, etc.), go to MilwaukeeRecycles.com. The centers will be closed on December 23-26, 30, 31 and January 2.

Recycling Collection Schedules

To determine their next scheduled garbage and recycling dates residents can visit MilwaukeeRecycles.com. There will be no garbage or recycling pick-up on December 23, 26, 30, and January 2.

About Milwaukee Recycling

Go to MilwaukeeRecycles.com for more information on acceptable materials for recycling in the City of Milwaukee. Daily tips, tricks, and recycling facts can be found at [Facebook.com/MilwaukeeRecycles](https://www.facebook.com/MilwaukeeRecycles).

Residents can also call (414) 286-CITY (-2489) for more information.

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