



TETON VALLEY COMMUNITY RECYCLING

TRANSFORMING WASTE TO RESOURCES

November 23, 2011

5 Tips for a Greener Holiday Season

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is upon us and for most this means celebrations, good food, good company and, most importantly, gifts! Unfortunately, the holidays also bring what seems like an environmentalist's worst nightmare: tons of extra garbage, millions of chopped-down trees, and megawatts of flashing lights.

With a little tweaking, however, everything from holiday gift-giving to light-stringing can celebrate the environment, too. This newsletter shares some ideas how to make your holiday season a little greener this year. If you have additional ideas, send them to tetonrecycling@gmail.com and we'll include them in the next newsletter!

**Happy Holidays,
TVCR Board of Directors**

1. Shop Local

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities. On November 26, make a pledge to shop small on [Small Business Saturday](#). If millions of people shop small, it will be huge.



Visit and buy just 1 item from your favorite local business on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. You'll be giving back to the community and saving time and fossil fuels by not driving to Idaho Falls or another shopping destination. If you need ideas, check out the new [Driggs Downtown shopping guide](#).

3. Recycle Wrapping Paper

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's day, Americans throw away a million extra tons [900,000 metric tons] of garbage each week, including holiday wrapping and packaging, according to Robert Lilienfeld, co-author of the book *Use Less Stuff: Environmental Solutions for Who We Really Are*. Why not recycle holiday gift wrap?



If every family reused just 2 feet [0.6 meter] of holiday ribbon, the **38,000 miles [61,000 kilometers] of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet**. So if you're not giving something that doesn't need to be wrapped from Tip #2, reuse the wrapping paper or use an easily reusable gift bag.

5. LED lights

First introduced in 2001, LEDs use semiconducting material rather than incandescent filaments and are 90 percent more efficient than traditional Christmas lights. According to one U.S. Department of Energy study, if everyone replaced their conventional holiday light strings with LEDs, at least **two billion kilowatt-hours of electricity could be saved in a month**.



2. Give Change

Instead of giving another pair of socks or a talking iphone to that person who has everything, give one of these "no gift wrap required" donations or services.

- Give needy families the gift of self-reliance and hope with [Heifer International](#). Your gift will help provide livestock, seeds, or training to a family struggling with hunger and poverty.
- Give your family the opportunity to use green power by signing up for the [Green Power](#) program from [Fall River Electric](#).
- Give experiences. Instead of creating and using more *stuff*, give something that is consumed or experienced like a massage, special dark chocolate, or a date night without the kids. In this busy world, our time and attention can be more valuable than any *thing* from the store.
- Give to their favorite non-profit. Of course we had to include this great gift idea! Add a name to the "in honor of" box for your [donation to TVCR](#) and we'll send a custom thank you card (on recycled paper of course) to the recipient.

4. Fake Fir or Compost

The traditional Christmas Tree is a holiday staple for many. If you chose a fresh tree, be sure to recycle it after Christmas by having it ground into wood chips, which can be used to mulch gardens or added to your compost pile. If you chose an artificial tree, know that you will be saving gas and other resources used each year to obtain and produce a live tree.



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