



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2009

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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE

**RESIDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO
THINK GREEN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

TIPS TO REDUCE HOLIDAY WASTE

From Thanksgiving through the New Year's holiday the average San Diego household generates between 3 and 10 extra bags of trash. However, not all this material is considered waste. Mixed into the trash are many recyclable materials, such as food and packaging. Too often these recyclables end up buried in the City's Miramar Landfill, taking up valuable space.

"The Landfill is a finite resource and has a limited number of years of useable life left to bury trash," said Chris Gonaver, director of the City of San Diego's Environmental Services Department.

"Although San Diego's waste diversion rate is up to 64 percent, we must do a better job recycling because more than two-thirds of material buried in the landfill is recyclable. Worse, as the Miramar Landfill and other regional landfills continue to reach capacity, transportation and disposal costs for San Diego's waste will increase," Gonaver added.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE GIFT WRAPPING & HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

Wrapping materials such as ribbon and wrapping paper are one of the largest quantities of materials that end up in the trash during the holiday season. In fact, each year 38,000 miles of ribbon alone is thrown out nationwide; which is enough to tie a bow around the Earth!

San Diegans can give the gift that keeps on giving by recycling products that can be reused and remade into postconsumer material. Please consider the following ideas that will help reduce, reuse and recycle materials used when wrapping packages:

- Decorate your home with holly, cedar, berries, fruits and nuts, all of which can be composted after use. Use popcorn and cranberries to decorate the tree.

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- Create gift tags from last year's holiday cards or wrapping paper.
- If you use traditional gift wrapping or send holiday cards, buy paper products made from recycled paper that can also be recycled.
- Design your own wrapping paper using paper shopping bags: decorate them with paints, crayons or art. You can also use blueprint paper or the Sunday comics.
- Drop off extra packaging materials at local private mailing centers. Call the Plastic Loosefill Council Peanuts Hotline at 1-800-828-2214 for the names of local businesses that reuse packing peanuts.
- Recycle non-metallic wrapping paper and boxes if you do not plan to use them again.
- Save wrapping paper and ribbons to reuse next year. Ribbons made from paper can be recycled. Ribbon made from plastic or fabric is not recyclable but can be reused on other packages.
- Cardboard boxes with clear plastic windows can be recycled.

GIVE GIFTS THAT WILL REDUCE WASTE

When selecting gifts to give family friends, and coworkers, consider the following ideas that can help reduce the amount of waste generated:

- Give non-material gifts such as gift certificates for balloon rides, bay/whale watching cruises, music lessons, transit passes and gym or museum memberships. Buy tickets to a local theme park, sporting event, movies or concerts.
- Give two gifts in one by using baskets, fabric bags, scarves or pillowcases to wrap gifts.
- Make home-baked goodies such as cookies, brownies or fudge and place in a reusable tin box, a kitchen container or a decorated box with minimal packaging.
- Give services such as making dinner or helping with home improvements.
- When selecting your gift please consider how long it will last. Often, a cheaper item will wear out long before its more durable equivalent.
- If you are giving electronics, give rechargeable batteries and a battery charger with it.
- And, always remember to look for items made from recycled content.

The following items that are used to package food and gifts can be recycled in your blue recycling bins:

- aluminum pie and baking tins, and foil;
- cardboard and paper packaging;
- gift wrapping;
- plastic juice bottles and soda, plastic milk and water jugs;
- cider, wine, champagne, beer and other alcohol bottles;
- wine-in-a-box boxes (remove the inside plastic bladder), and
- empty aerosol cans.

ADDITIONAL RECYCLING INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

For more information on holiday waste reduction ideas, recycling, composting and other related topics, contact the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department at (858)694-7000, or visit the ESD recycling website at: www.recyclingworks.com.