



"Reduce – Reuse – Recycle"

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Dreaming of a Green Christmas

Behind the season's festive gatherings, champagne celebrations, and sparkling lights on chilly nights lurks the dark and dirty truth that consumer waste increases by an average of 25% from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day each year. Whilst our little ones are dreaming of sugar plums and surprises from Santa, their futures are compromised by wrappings that aren't recycled, and food waste, wreaths and trees that decompose in our landfills creating climate-changing greenhouse gases. A brighter future can begin now, with thoughtful choices for this holiday season.

"Green" gifts prevent waste, and are easy at the last minute. Giving "experiences" will create memories that last a lifetime, rather than "things" destined to exceed our lifetimes in a landfill. Help someone fulfill a Bucket List, give annual passes, memberships, tickets or classes. Gift cards, gift certificates and the ultimate green (cash) ensure the recipient gets what they want or need without hassles of returns or wasted resources. For the person who has everything, donating to their favorite charity or non-profit is a present with a higher purpose.

Living plants are literally green; give live herb plants to the avid cook, or easy-care succulent plants in a clever repurposed container. Consumables are green today and gone tomorrow. Delectable locally made goodies like wine or craft beers, dried fruit, nuts and chocolates can be savored or shared.

Gifts that encourage reuse and waste reduction can make long-term impacts, like a travel mug with gourmet coffee beans; a waste-free lunch kit complete with cloth napkins, reusable bottle and utensils; chic shopping bags or personalized bags imprinted with a photo or phrase.

Green your holiday celebrations and recycle your cans and bottles. Encourage guests to recycle by setting out a recycling bin next to the trashcan. Offer party fare leftovers in reusable containers.

After the holidays, recycle your cut tree, wreath and garlands. Evergreen pieces under 3-feet in length can be recycled in your curbside yard waste cart. Trees under 5-feet without any decorations, stands or flocking can go straight to the curb for recycling. Check with your garbage hauler for the dates they'll pick up holiday trees. Holiday trees of any size can be recycled free at all three Salinas Valley Recycles locations from December 26 through January 31.

Burned out strings of lights, broken electronics or dead batteries? Recycle electronic waste free at any Salinas Valley Recycles location.



Greening your holidays is one of the greatest gifts you can give your family and your community, and an important step toward a future without landfills. Wishing you the happiest holidays and a greener New Year!

