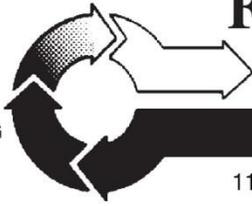


REDUCTION  
RECYCLING  
COMPOSTING  
DISPOSAL



# Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

117 Main Street., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Greenfield, MA 01301 • (413) 772-2438 • Fax: (413) 772-3786  
[www.franklincountywastedistrict.org](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org) • [info@franklincountywastedistrict.org](mailto:info@franklincountywastedistrict.org)

## How to Reduce Trash this Holiday Season

During the holiday season, the average American family disposes of 25% more trash than they usually do (source: US EPA). Much of this waste can be reduced, reused, recycled or composted. When residents reduce their holiday trash, they can save money on “Pay As You Throw” town trash stickers or bags, reduce carbon and methane emissions, and protect our environment.

### Recycling Yes/No

The following paper items are on the “yes” list for household recycling: wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, and paper greeting cards/envelopes. However, it is important not to recycle these paper items if they contain metallic inks, glitter, or foil (one example is foil-lined envelopes). Tape and labels are okay. Remove batteries from singing greeting cards before recycling the card.

Other recyclable paper items include catalogs, paper calendars, paper shopping bags, and cardboard (both corrugated and paperboard). Here’s a holiday tip: when opening gifts, use a paper bag to collect paper recyclables.

These items are on the “no” list for household recycling: ribbons, bows, tinsel, glossy photo cards, holiday light strings, Christmas tree netting, bubble wrap, paper envelopes lined with bubble wrap, packing peanuts, Styrofoam in any form, plastic shipping envelopes, batteries, and the molded plastic used to package toys, electronics, etc.

Some of these unacceptable items, called “tangles,” cause problems at recycling facilities because they get tangled in the sorting equipment: holiday light strings, power cords, and Christmas tree netting.

Recyclables from Franklin County Waste District towns are processed at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). See their website for printable recycling guides, including a colorful yes/no holiday recycling guide: <https://springfieldmrf.org>

### Recycling Options for Other Materials

Many of these unacceptable items can be recycled elsewhere:

Holiday light strings and power cords are accepted at scrap metal dealers and in the scrap metal dumpsters at town transfer stations. A mail-in recycling program is available at [holidayleds.com](http://holidayleds.com).

The UPS Store in Greenfield accepts clean, dry packing materials such as bubble wrap, packing peanuts, and inflatable “air pillow” packaging for reuse.

Plastic bag recycling programs at grocery and retail stores accept bubble wrap, plastic shipping envelopes (no paper), inflatable “air pillow” packaging, and other bags/films marked #2 or #4. A list of acceptable items is at: [nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1](http://nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1).

Gold Circuit E-Cycling in Agawam accepts various types of Styrofoam foam from the public for a fee: (413) 328-3187, [goldcircuit.io](http://goldcircuit.io); [recycleyourfoam.com](http://recycleyourfoam.com).

Certain batteries (rechargeable, button, and lithium) are accepted for special recycling at transfer stations; place in plastic bags and hand to the attendant. Staples Stores accept all types of batteries for free recycling.

When the holidays are over, check with your town about Christmas tree recycling. Your tree may be recycled as mulch this spring.

### Creative Reuse

In addition to recycling, consider wrapping your gifts in reused materials. Gifts can be creatively wrapped in reused gift wrap, old calendar pages, maps or map book pages, paper bags, sheet music, old posters, wallpaper scraps, fabric, scarves, newspaper, comics, or kids’ artwork.

Gifts can be wrapped inside cloth bags, reusable decorative tins, reusable shopping bags, or baskets. Or, make the wrapping part of the gift; for example, a kitchen towel or oven mitt to hold kitchen utensils or gadgets, or a book wrapped in a scarf.

Wrapped gifts can be tied up with biodegradable twine and adorned with natural items such as pinecones, pine or holly branches, shells, or buttons. Last year's holiday cards can be cut up to reuse as beautiful gift cards.

One of the most important steps for reusing materials is unwrapping gifts carefully and saving gift wrap, gift boxes, ribbons, bows and gift bags for reuse next year.

## **Compost**

Another way to reduce holiday trash is to compost food and paper waste generated from holiday meals. Food scraps might seem small, but they add up: waste characterization studies performed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) show that 22% of the residential trash in Massachusetts is food waste.

Local transfer stations have compost programs that accept all types of solid food waste, including meat, bones, and cheese, plus paper waste such as paper napkins, paper towels, and more. Unacceptable items include liquids, foil, metal, glass, and plastic. These programs accept separated food waste free of charge (transfer stations may require annual permits). The following transfer stations in Franklin County have compost programs: Bernardston, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Greenfield (open to non-residents for a \$5 host fee), Leverett, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Shelburne, Warwick, Wendell, and Whately. Gill residents have access to a special food waste drop-off program; contact town hall to learn more.

Composting at home is another way to reduce trash, and it provides the additional benefit of improved garden soil. Franklin County Solid Waste District sells discounted "Earth Machine" home compost bins and compost pails to District residents. Pricing is \$25 or \$65, depending on the resident's town. It is not recommended to put meat, bones, or dairy in home compost bins. For more details and pricing, contact the solid waste district or see: [franklincountywastedistrict.org/Composting](http://franklincountywastedistrict.org/Composting)

For more information, contact Franklin County Solid Waste Management District: (413) 772-2438, [info@franklincountywastedistrict.org](mailto:info@franklincountywastedistrict.org); or visit [franklincountywastedistrict.org](http://franklincountywastedistrict.org). *MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).*