

3 R's Holiday Newsletter

December 2023



Stop WishCycling this Holiday Season (excerpt from CBC news)

The general manager of solid waste management services for the City of Toronto has just one Christmas wish: That people will think twice before they toss things in the blue bin.

“Among the things people have tried unsuccessfully to recycle: Bowling balls, a dead boa constrictor, and a sofa.

During the holidays, we do see an increase in improperly sorted recycling. A lot of trash ends up in places where it shouldn't. All that improperly sorted recycling costs the city — and taxpayers — money.”

Every year, the City of Toronto manages over 900,000 tonnes of waste. This requires money, energy, and resources and takes up valuable landfill space. Waste reduction should always be top of mind as the less waste produced; the less there is to manage. Join the waste reduction movement and help keep items out of landfill.

‘Tis the season to be jolly, but with gift giving, and feasts, the holiday season can produce a lot of waste. Remember the 3Rs – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle this holiday season.

Consider low waste, high impact gifts

- Tickets to an on-line event or show

- A membership or gift certificate from a local restaurant
- Donate to a local charity on behalf of a loved one
- A gift of learning with a course or class
- A service such as a cleaning service, spa treatment or oil change
- Use reusable bags for shopping and gift giving
- Plan ahead in the year, when shopping, consider thrift stores and garage sales or flea market to find gently used items at discounted prices.
- Find new uses for things you would otherwise throw away
 - use cookie tins for storage
 - turn old clothes into rags
 - use cans as pencil holders and old jars as vases
- Borrow tools, party supplies, camping gear, sports equipment, board games and toys from a lending library
- Extend the life of items like clothing, appliances and electronics by repairing them and keep an eye out for repair events in the city. (*Learn about the City's Bicycle Repair and Sewing Repair Hubs*)
- Give clothing, books, toys and more a new life by donating them. Find non-profit organizations where you can donate unwanted clothing and other items. Find City-permitted clothing drop boxes.

Decorate consciously

- Instead of buying new decorations shop second-hand to add to your collection
- Bring nature into your home by decorating with pine cones, plants and boughs (don't pick them off a live tree)
- Revive old decorations by adding a fresh coat of paint

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Get crafty when gift wrapping

- Use old crate paper, newspaper, maps, or calendars as gift wrap
- Reuse last year's wrap, bows, ribbon and bags
- Learn the art of Furoshiki and create fancy gift wrap using cloth and other fabrics
- Paint and decorate bags and cardboard boxes

Make it a low-waste gathering within your bubble

- Opt for real dishware and cloth napkins instead of plastic
- Tell guests that they will go home with any leftovers if they bring their own container
- Host a donation party and donate canned goods to a local shelter

Why Food Waste is a Problem

Toronto City Council has adopted a strategy to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Toronto to net zero by 2040. One way to contribute is by managing your holiday waste, including food waste that creates methane, a GHG. Here are some ways to give your holidays an environmental makeover:

Plan ahead

- Spend some time on the weekend planning meals for the following week.
- Check your fridge, freezer and cupboards before shopping. See what needs to be used up and then think of a meal to make with those items.
- Make a list of what you need at the grocery store and stick to it to curb impulse buys.

Keep it fresh

- To preserve freshness and nutrition, use perishables like seafood and meat earlier in the week and save staples (pasta, dairy, eggs) for later in the week.
- Buy fresh vegetables in smaller amounts and use frozen vegetables to fill in the gaps.
- Keep food fresh longer by storing it in the correct place and setting the temperature in your fridge to 4°C or lower.
- Dedicate one produce drawer to storing vegetables that wilt, like leafy greens & another to fruits & vegetables that produce ethylene, like apples and peppers.
- Educate yourself on how to properly store food. Make your freezer your best friend.
- Give leftovers a new life: turn cranberry sauce into muffins!
- Freeze items to make them last longer. Bread can last up to three months in the freezer, chicken can last up to nine months and most vegetables can be frozen for eight months to a year.

Use it up

- Soak wilted vegetables like celery, lettuce, broccoli or carrots in a bowl of ice water for 5-10 minutes to reinvigorate them.
- Fruits and vegetables past their prime are not only great in Smoothies but also taste great in baked, stir-fried and grilled dishes.
- A best before date is not the same as expiration date. If a package has remained unopened even after the best before date, it can still be of good quality and freshness, as long as it has been stored properly.
- Learn or create new recipes, which allow you to use the entire food such

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as making chips from potato peels or pesto with carrot tops.

- Try pickling to preserve fruits and vegetables for a later day.

Sweet & Savoury Squash Pancakes

Ingredients

- 250 gm. leftover roasted squash
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup milk
- 150 gm. Flour
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp. nutmeg

Instructions

- Peel skin off of the squash. Mash in a large bowl with a fork.
- Remove rosemary from sprig & mix into squash. Mix in remaining ingredients until well blended.
- Add some butter to a non-stick pan. Ladle mixture into pan. Cook 2 minutes on each side until golden & the edges are crisp. Stack them on a plate & keep warm at 150 °F until ready to eat. Add more butter as needed.
- Serve with a drizzle of maple syrup. Sprinkle chopped walnuts on top (optional).

Go to www.lovefoodhatewaste.ca for more tips and recipes

Recycle Right

When you can't reduce or reuse, put your holiday waste in its proper place:

Garbage: Aluminum foil, foil/metallic gift-wrap, ribbons and bows, bubble wrap, wooden fruit crates, broken dishes, glasses and black plastics like coffee pods.

Muselets (the metal cage over those lovely champagne bottles) and corks from wine

bottles (if you can save the corks to donate at the community environment days).

Green Bin (organics): Fruit and vegetable scraps, meat (including bones), spoiled cakes and cookies, soiled paper plates and napkins

Blue Bin (recycling): Paper gift-wrap and cards, plastic over-wrap, cookie tins, plastic disposable cups, plates (if rinsed), aluminum trays, roasting pans

Unsure where an item goes? Refer to your "2023 Recycling, Green Bin and Garbage Calendar or visit the Waste Wizard or download the TOWaste app.

NOTE: *Make sure you educate your caregivers and friends & family who are visiting over the holidays on how the 3-tier chute system works.*

For our Safety but Bah, Humbug!

The tradition of decorating our apartment doors and the hallways can continue but we have to temper our ways according to the Toronto Fire Services inspector.

- No garlands on the railings unless they have fire retardant certification attached
- No holiday pillows on the benches
- No waxed candle displays
- Door embellishments and items hung on the walls must be minimal with the least amount of combustible material as possible



"Oh, Tannenbaum"

If you are going to buy a real tree buy one that is already potted and investigate transplanting it in the spring. Many grocery stores sell them.

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If you can't go without a real tree and you are ready to dispose of it remove all tinsel, ornaments, nails and lights. Wrap it in a blanket or a bed sheet or a previously purchased plastic bag. This reduces the amount of needles falling off onto the carpet and ruining the co-op's vacuum cleaner.

Disposal

Take the covered tree down through the basement to the garden at the top of the underground garage ramp. **You must remove the bag** or the tree will not be picked up. Dispose of the bag in the Blue Bin.

Greenery, wreaths and boughs are disposed of in the same way. **Do not throw them down the chute.**

N.B. Trees are picked up by the city in January so hold off until then.

Festive Trivia



Was Saturnalia the original Christmas?

The ancient Roman festival of Saturnalia was the most anticipated week on the Roman calendar, celebrated every December during the Winter solstice. In paying homage to Saturn, the god of time and agriculture, Romans would take the week off from work (even the slaves), decorate their homes with pine wreaths, light festive candles, attend raucous parties and feasts, and exchange gifts and offerings. When the Roman Empire embraced Christianity, many of these

traditions were carried over to the celebration of Christmas.

Please take the following to Staples at Yonge & Soudan for recycling:

- ✚ Dried Up pens & Magic markers
- ✚ Inkjet & printer cartridges
- ✚ Batteries, cell & Smart phones, wireless PDA's, pagers (remember to remove your SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) & smash it)



Laundry room

- ✚ **Toxic Waste Bin** - Paint, empty aerosol cans, etc.

Basement Lobby

- ✚ **Refund Bin** – empty wine and beer bottles

Basement

Outside compactor room

- ✚ **Kitty Litter bins** – in plastic bags
- ✚ **Oversized bags** - garbage and recycling plus boxes (that are broken down and bundled together)
- ✚ **Small household electronics such as VCR's & DVD players**



One Final Note:

With statutory holidays the co-op will be short-staffed over the holiday season so be mindful of the amount of recycling that you take down to the in the garage and place on the wall between the doors and the compactor room. If there is too much of it take your recycling back to your apartment and keep it for another day. It's not smelly like the organics – it's just inconvenient.

If you notice waste piling up or the chute clogs call the co-op cell phone at: 416-837-2667