

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

50 Miles Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

(413) 772-2438, Fax: (413) 772-3786

www.franklincountywastedistrict.org, info@franklincountywastedistrict.org

PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

Holiday Recycling Guidelines

During the holiday season, the average American family throws away at least 25% more trash than they do during the rest of the year (US EPA). A large portion of this trash could be avoided, reused, recycled or composted. Recycling or reusing your holiday waste can help you save money on “Pay As You Throw” town trash stickers or bags, save money for your town, and be kinder to the earth.

The Springfield Materials Recycling Facility, which processes recyclables from over 70 communities in western Massachusetts, including those in Franklin County, asks residents to keep the following recycling guidelines in mind.

Wrapping paper and tissue paper are acceptable in household recycling, but only if they do not contain foil, metallic inks, or glitter. Tape is OK. Paper gift bags and shopping bags are also recyclable, and any type of handle is OK to include. Other holiday waste that is recyclable: greeting cards (except those with foil, wire, glitter), envelopes (plastic windows are OK), catalogs, calendars, corrugated cardboard boxes, and paperboard gift boxes. Here’s a holiday tip: when opening or wrapping presents, keep a paper bag or recycling bin handy to collect paper recyclables.

Please DO NOT include the following items in household recycling: ribbons, bows, tinsel, holiday lights, Christmas tree netting, bubble wrap, packing peanuts, polystyrene (Styrofoam), plastic bags, and plastic “blister pack” packaging (that’s the type that requires scissors to open).

Holiday lights are NOT recyclable in your town’s household recycling because they get wrapped around the sorting equipment at the recycling facility. Holiday light strings are accepted for recycling at some scrap metal yards. Some Home Depot and Lowe’s stores offer free recycling for holiday lights. Additionally, you can get a coupon for 15% off of HolidayLEDs.com energy efficient holiday lights by mailing in your old light strings for recycling: www.holidayleds.com/christmas-light-recycling-program.aspx

Clean, dry packing materials such as peanuts and bubble wrap, inflatable “air pillow” packaging, and Styrofoam sheets are accepted free for reuse at The UPS Store, 21 Mohawk Trail, Greenfield: (413) 772-2523.

There are many creative ways to reduce or reuse gift-wrap. One of the most important steps for reusing is unwrapping gifts carefully and reusing gift-wrap, gift boxes, ribbons, bows and gift bags next year.

According to the EPA, battery purchases and usage increases by 40% around the holidays. All seventeen town transfer stations within the Franklin County Solid Waste District accept rechargeable, button, and lithium batteries for free, year-round recycling. Rechargeable batteries are found in any appliances, electronics, phones, or toys that can be recharged. These batteries contain heavy metals and should never be thrown in the trash.

Composting is easy and can greatly decrease holiday meal waste. The municipal compost programs at the transfer stations in Greenfield, Leverett, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Wendell and Whately accept all types of food waste, including meat, bones, cheese, and paper waste such as Chinet paper plates, paper to-go containers, napkins and paper towels.

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

To learn more about recycling in our region, please visit springfieldmrf.org. (Click on “What’s Recyclable at the MRF?” for a downloadable “Recycling on the Holidays” guide.) For more information, please visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org or contact Franklin County Solid Waste District at: 413-772-2438, or info@franklincountywastedistrict.org. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD) The District is an equal opportunity provider.