

The Green Notebook
Greening Your Holiday Hall Decking

Did you know if every family reused just two feet of ribbon, the amount saved would total 38,000 miles—enough to tie a bow around the Earth? Or that Americans produce up to 1 million extra tons of garbage each week between Thanksgiving and New Year's? (Source: *The Use Less Stuff* report, The Cygnus Group)

When it comes to decking your halls, consider some of these easy-to-do ideas and remember to invite Mother Nature to your holiday celebrations!

- According to a U.S. Department of Energy study, if everyone replaced their conventional holiday lights with LEDs (light-emitting diodes that use computer chip technology rather than incandescent filaments), a least two billion kilowatt-hours of electricity could be saved in one month. You can find LED lights at most local retailers.
- Make gift tags this year with the greeting cards you received last year—or use the fronts as holiday postcards this year
- Send holiday wishes via email to save paper, stamps and photos (just attach the family photo!)
- Invest in holiday plates and cups and use your silverware at gatherings to cut down on disposables—just make your loved ones do the holiday dishes! When else to you get to catch up on all that good family gossip?
- Wrap presents in the Sunday comic pages, sheet music, old maps, a holiday tea towel or, my favorite, children's artwork—or use reusable gift bags or baskets
- Make a centerpiece or mantel decoration by using cuttings from your own bushes or trees or purchase greenery at the local garden center; make ornaments out of pine cones, flowers, cranberries, or popcorn
- Go treasure-hunting at resale shops for ornaments and decorations
- Consider using a live potted Christmas tree (just keep it well watered and plant ASAP) and be sure and recycle your live trees which can be used for mulch. Price Barnes can take them if you don't have city pick-up.
- Drop off extra packing material at a mailing center for reuse
- If you find yourself with surplus food or decorations this season (or even that gift you just don't know what to do with), consider donating to the local shelter or food bank (in Delaware County, contact People in Need or the Common Ground Free Store.)

Enjoy a green holiday season! (Sources: National Audubon Society and greenlivingideas.com)

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