

# WASTE TRIMMING IDEAS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS



## Gift Giving



- Use and reuse gift bags or decorative boxes instead of wrapping paper. You can purchase them at discount stores and card shops or decorate your own out of plain paper bags.
- Wrap gifts in the comics section of the Sunday newspaper and recycled it afterwards. Kids and the kids at heart will enjoy the laughs before opening their gifts.

- Use old holiday cards for gift tags. Cut out the front flap or the inside text message of old cards you've received and use it to make gift tags or your own holiday post cards.

- Think of gifts that don't have to be wrapped, like gift certificates (to clothing stores, theaters, concerts and restaurants), baked goods or houseplants. This is a great idea for someone who seems to have everything.



- Reuse bows and ribbon from last year. Not only does it reduce waste but it also saves money.
- Reuse packing materials like bubble-wrap, peanuts and shredded paper to mail gifts or use popcorn and include a note that birds like to eat it.



- Tie a large bow around larger gifts and hide them until it's gift-giving time
- Give a potted plant instead of cut flowers. Its beauty will be enjoyed all year long.

- Send email cards instead of print ones or at least buy recycled-content cards and recycle the ones you receive (any non foil-lined cards and envelopes).
- Make the wrapping part of the gift, like using a basket to hold candles and a picture frame or a toolbox to hold a set of tools.



**Find more waste reduction tips at [www.dakotavalleyrecycling.org](http://www.dakotavalleyrecycling.org)**

*This handout was printed on 30% recycled-content paper and funded in part by the cities of Burnsville, Eagan and Apple Valley, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners and the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance.*

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## Entertaining



- Borrow decorations or start a tradition for passing on decorations to friends and relatives for one-time celebrations, like graduations.
- Think of party favors that are long-lasting and useful, with minimal packaging.

- Buy locally grown organic produce for fruits and vegetables on your menu. You support your local economy and don't have to worry about pesticide residue on your food.

- Buy food and party supplies in bulk whenever possible. You'll save money and have less waste from packaging.

- Send out e-mail invitations instead of print ones. You'll save money on stamps and conserve paper.



- Provide a recycling bin for beverage containers next to the garbage can and remind your guests to recycle.

- Use washable table cloths, napkins and place settings instead of disposable ones. Your table will look more elegant and you'll have less garbage to take out afterwards. But if that's not possible, at least use recycled-content supplies.



- Send leftovers home with guests and compost food scraps.
- Encourage your guests to carpool to your gathering to save gas and parking space.
- Plan your shopping in advance so you don't make several trips to the same store.

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