

# Create memories, not waste

## Environmental Services

Capital Regional District | December 2020

### From gift giving to meal planning, here's how to make the 3Rs work during the holidays!

The holiday season brings a lot of joy into our homes but it can also bring a lot of extra waste. Packaging and wrapping paper, leftover food, plastic toys that often aren't loved for as long as they last ... it all adds to the local waste stream. The good news is that it doesn't have to. Following the principles of the '3R pollution prevention hierarchy'—reduce first, reuse second and recycle third—can help to reduce the environmental impact of the holiday season.

Here's ten simple ways to create a holiday that's memorable in all the right ways!

- 1. Opt for low-waste gifts:** Gift experiences—memberships, subscription services, a gift card to a local restaurant; homemade gifts like preserves and cookies; or gifts made to last like heirlooms, camping gear or quality cookware.
- 2. Recycle shipping materials:** Shopping online? Most shipping materials can be recycled—paper envelopes in your blue bag, rigid plastic packaging in your blue box and cardboard can be flattened and cut down (max. 30" square).
- 3.** Recycle bubble wrap, plastic envelopes, inflated air packets and Styrofoam blocks for free at a [Recycle BC depot](#).
- 4. Go gift wrap-less this year:** There are many ways to hide what's inside without the traditional giftwrap/tape/bow combo. Use materials you already have around the house—things like newspaper, paper bags, old calendar pages or reuse old gift wrap/gift bags. Wrapping a kitchen or food-themed gift? Use a pretty tea towel!
- 5. DIY your holiday décor:** You'll find many decorations right in your own backyard: pinecones, cedar boughs and sprigs of holly look beautiful in a wreath, centrepiece or garland. The added bonus? They smell amazing, too!
- 6. Green up your holiday dinner:** Keep your holiday dinner green by using reusable or recyclable items. Swap out disposable linens, dishes and cutlery for the real deal.
- 7. Right-size your dinner plans:** Having a smaller gathering this year? Reduce food waste by planning portions appropriately and preparing only what you and your guests will eat. Consider buying a smaller bird or forgoing those less popular dishes; save leftovers in reusable containers or deliver them to a friend.
- 8. Be waterwise:** Thaw your turkey in the fridge instead of using running water or reuse the water from cooking vegetables in soups gravies, sauces or for watering the plants.
- 9. Keep your sink fat-free:** Holiday cooking means more fats, oils and greases—save and store fats for use in future recipes or dispose of them in your green bin. Whichever you decide, be sure they don't end up down the drain where they don't belong.
- 10. Recycle your containers:** After dinner, recycle your aluminum trays, whipped cream cans, egg nog cartons and deli trays in your blue box, and place paper plates and food scraps in your green bin.

It's that easy! Learn more at [www.crd.bc.ca/holidayrecycling](http://www.crd.bc.ca/holidayrecycling).