



Go Green for the Holidays



Make sustainable holiday choices when you are shopping, traveling, sending cards, decorating, and choosing gifts. When you save energy and resources, you protect the environment and safeguard health both now and for the future.

For many of us, our priority during the holidays is time spent with family and friends; but the holidays can also be a time when we waste too much energy and create too much waste.

Consider these statistics:

- Americans throw away about 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve.
- If every American family wrapped just three (3) presents in reused materials, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.
- About 35% of Americans have an unused Christmas present collecting dust in their closets.

If you want to incorporate sustainability into your holiday celebrations, we have a list of suggestions for you. Some of them may spark your creativity—and even be fun!



1 - Consider buying a living tree you can plant outside or keep as a houseplant after the holidays.



2 - Give gifts that are durable, energy-efficient, recyclable, or made of natural products.



3 - Make your own gifts: knit, sew, bake, build, or create art; make calendars using your own photographs or a recipe book with favorite recipes.



4 - Eat healthy and sustainable foods.

The more people who participate in these energy- and resource-saving activities, the greater effect they will have on our planet; and a sustainable planet will result in better health and longer lives for the people and animals that live on it.

Content source:

National Center for Environmental Health¹

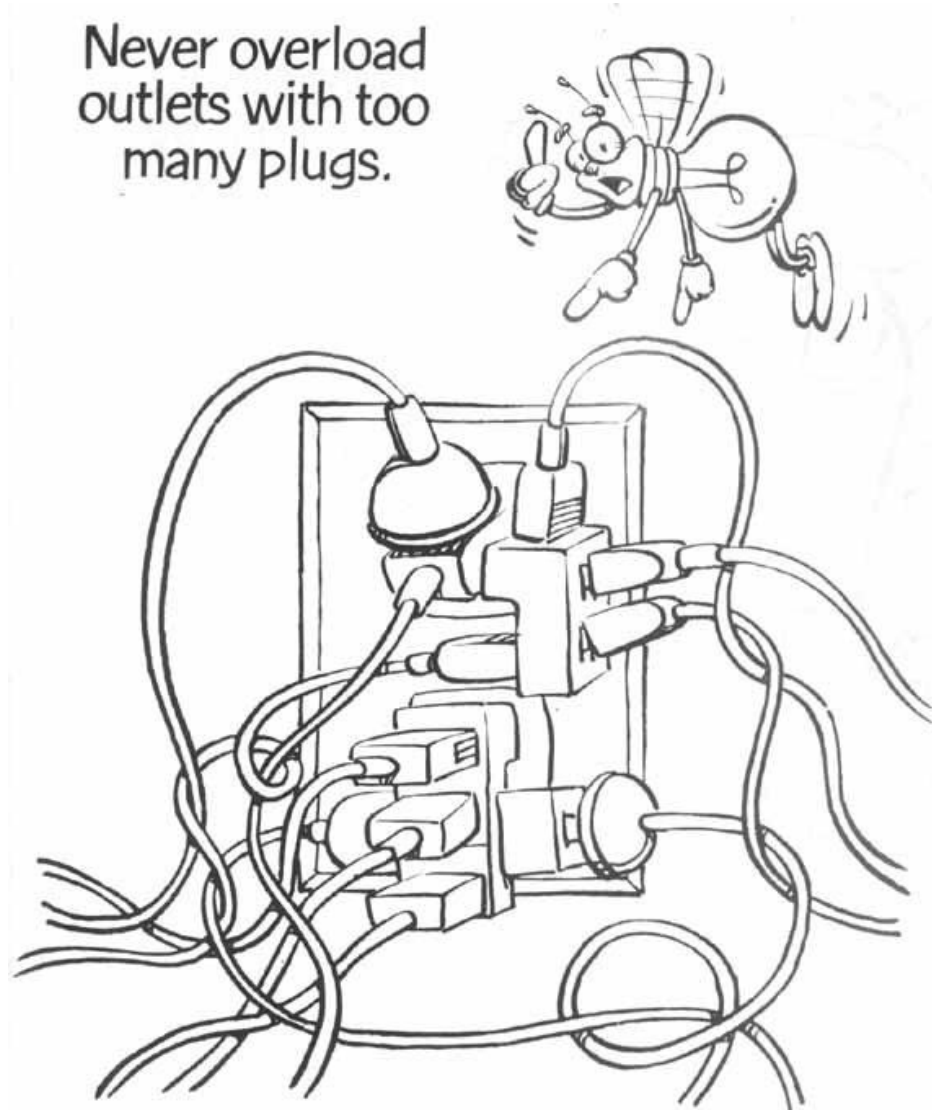
¹<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh>

Holiday Safety Tips . . .



5 - All the season's carols tell us that this is "the most wonderful time of the year!" But a lot can go wrong over the holidays if you are not mindful .

Click upper left corner of each of the following images for safety suggestions associated with the image; then click on each Picture to move through stack.



6 -

- Don't overload electrical outlets
- *Inspect electrical decorations before use, check for frayed wires, and loose connections, make sure you see the safety certification labels(i.e. UL, CSA or ETL)*
 - *Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights*
 - *Turn off, unplug, and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or leaving the house.*



7 - Even Angel Hair can Hurt

- *"Angel hair," made from spun glass, can irritate your eyes and skin; always wear gloves or substitute non-flammable cotton*
- *Decorate the tree with your kids in mind; move ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks toward the top*
 - *Spraying artificial snow can irritate your lungs if inhaled; follow directions carefully*
- *Plants can spruce up your holiday decorating, but keep those that may be poisonous (including some Poinsettias) out of reach of children or pets; the national Poison Control Center² can be reached at (800) 222-1222*
 - *Make sure paths are clear so no one trips on wrapping paper, decorations, toys, etc.*



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²<http://www.poison.org/>

8 - Cooking for Family and Friends

Pay attention to the food you are preparing; Don't give the gift of food poisoning

Wash hands frequently

Defrost meats in refrigerator; use a food thermometer to make sure meats are cooked to safe temperatures

Frying a turkey? Agreed it is delicious! - Best option use an Air Fryer, but if you must use deep fryer follow these important guides:

- *Make sure you read the instructions on how to prepare your "bird" safely.*
- *Use deep fryer outside, on level surface, keep a fire extinguisher nearby*
- *The lid and handles can become very hot take precautions when handling*

Remember you Pets. *The aromas from your foods may entice your furry friends to try and take part in the bounty, but most of our domesticated pets cannot handle our foods without some adverse effects. Chocolate seems to be a general no-no for all animals. Visit this link to find out more about dog and cat holiday safety. <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/>³*

Birds and Parrots are extremely sensitive to certain fumes. For example, the gases released from nonstick cookware and other household items made from polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and even some household disinfectants and cleaners can be deadly to our feathered friends. Find out more; visit the following link. <http://www.naturechest.com/toptendaforb.html>



9 - It's Better to Give Safely

Everyone has heard about the importance of choosing toys for infants and small children to avoid small parts, but few of us also remember that serious thought must also be used when choosing gifts for seniors.

Choose gifts for older adults that are not heavy or awkward to handle

³https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/holidays.aspx?utm_source=prettyurl&utm_campaign=holiday&utm_term=holiday

Check to make sure that gifts that are given and received are not on a recall list. Visit www.cpsc.gov



10 - Holiday Theft

Sad to say, but it is a reality of our times. Best things to do:

- Lock cars, trucks and homes
- Leave lights on; use a timer to switch lights on and off if going away
- Be careful with your social media posting: where you are going, when you're going and what you got! etc.
- Package delivery- request signature delivery confirmation, or deliver to a neighbor who will be home.

After gifts are opened, dispose of your present boxes creatively- placing your 60 TV box at the curb on trash day is advertisement. Try breaking down boxes and other packaging so it is not obvious to others what wonderful gifts your family has received.



11 - Winter Wonderland- Going North for the Holidays

If you have never experienced the beauty and quiet of winter snowfall, you might definitely want to add this to your "bucket list".

However, there is nothing peaceful about driving in winter snow and/or ice especially when it is a new experience; or if our Florida warm climate has dulled your recall of the necessary precautions. . . Visit the following link for some important tips on driving in "bad" weather. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/driving-icy-roads-means-rethinking-your-journey-skill-terry-penney>⁴

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Drinking During the Holidays



According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, during the holidays alcohol consumption is at its highest even among those who rarely drink. They recommend to become familiar with how much alcohol your body can tolerate to stay safe during the holidays. They also recommend moderate drinking, for women moderate drinking is considered 1 drink per day and for men up to 2 drinks per day.

Hosting a Party:

Have non-alcoholic beverages available for guest

Find alternative transportation for intoxicated guests

Arrange for an official designated driver for your party, who will not drink at all

Attending a Party:

Have something to eat before consuming alcoholic beverages

Eat high protein foods that will stay in your stomach longer and slow absorption of alcohol into your system

Know your limit

The Environmental Health and Safety Department wishes you and your family a happy holiday season and reminds you to assign a designated driver prior to drinking and to avoid driving under the influence.

References

<https://www.centeronaddiction.org/the-buzz-blog/drinking-during-holiday-season-what-be-aware>

A "lighter" look at tree safety . . .



