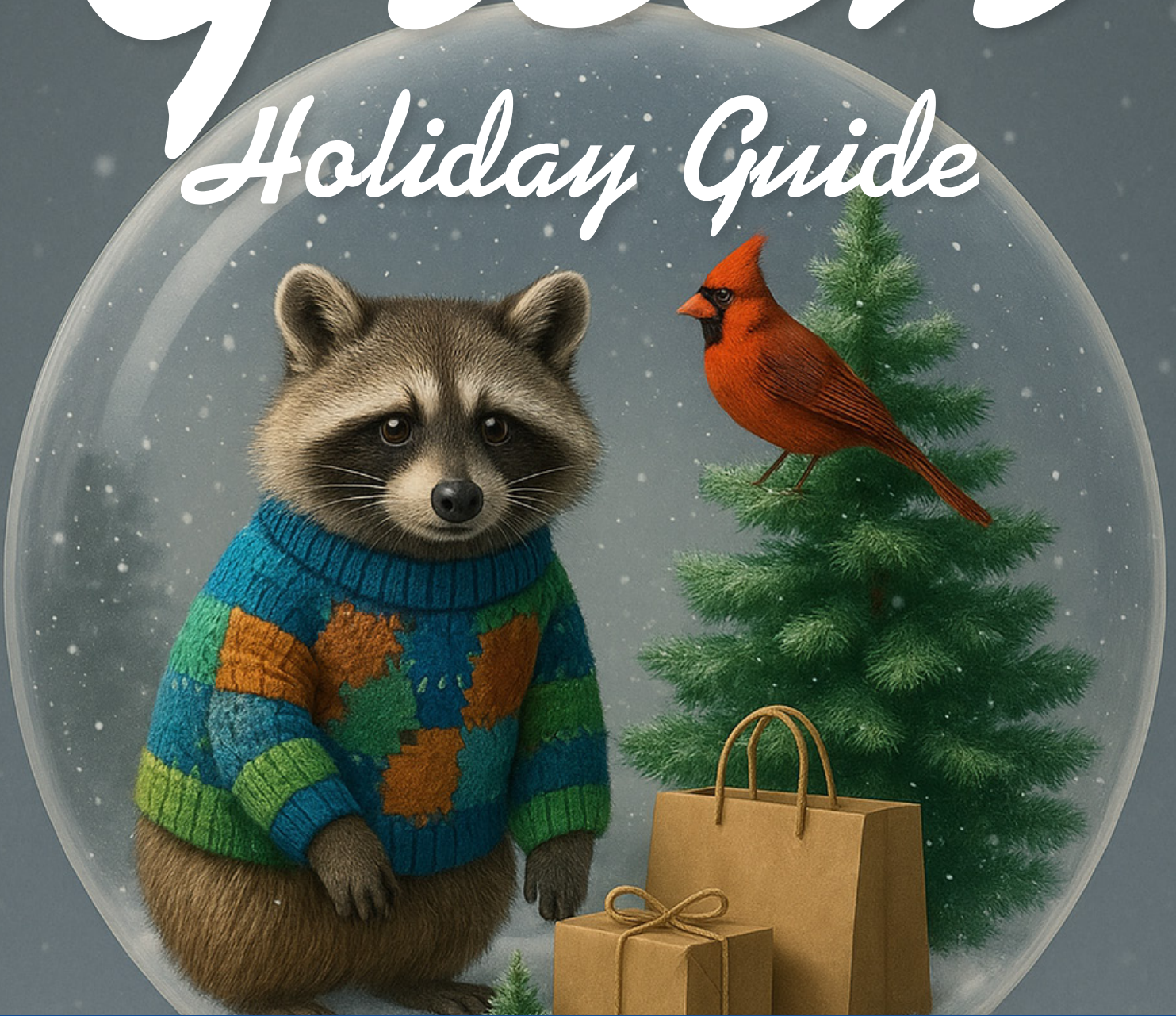


**SWACO**  
FROM WASTE TO RESOURCES

# Green

## Holiday Guide



**A guide to a more sustainable holiday season.**





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## *Message to readers:*

### **Happy Holidays from your friends at SWACO.**

We hope you're enjoying the season and appreciate you taking the time to learn how to be more sustainable during the holidays.

According to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, 25% more trash is created during this time. In central Ohio, the majority of items that arrive at the county's landfill could have been reused, recycled or composted.

You can make a difference this season — for your wallet, the environment and our community — when you take simple actions to reduce waste, reuse items you already have on hand and recycle right.

As you explore the waste reduction tips in this guide, we encourage you to consider incorporating them into your celebrations and daily routines. **For more sustainability resources in central Ohio, visit [swaco.org](http://swaco.org).**

# Décor



## Reduce

Use natural items you have on hand to decorate your home! Cinnamon sticks and dried citrus make fragrant ornaments and room fillers.

## Reuse

Using items from previous years or repurpose items around the house to make décor — like pinecones, ribbons, or mason jars.

Shop secondhand to purchase items that are new to you.

## Recycle

Putting up holiday lights this year and noticing some no longer work? Bring them to the SWACO Recycling Convenience Center for recycling or click [here](#) to find another string light collection near you.

## Compost

Let your cooking do all the talking! Your masterpiece in the kitchen is a showstopper — forgo traditional decorations and let your dinner spread be the centerpiece.

You can also compost pinecones with your yard waste and citrus with your regular compost.



# Meal Planning, Shopping, & Prep

## Reduce

Shop with a list to ensure you only buy the quantity of items you need.

Use items already in your refrigerator and pantry first.

Use the [Guesti-mator tool](#) to help plan meal portions.

Store food properly. Check out the [Food Storage Guide](#) for information on how to store purchased foods in order to maximize their shelf life and discover tips to revive produce, dairy and other items which are a little past their prime.

## Reuse

Turn leftovers from the big meal into new and exciting dishes for lunch the next day! Click [here](#) to find some yummy inspiration recipes.

## Recycle

Remember to recycle plastic bottles, tubs, jugs and cups, glass bottles and jars, metal cans and cups, paper and cardboard and carton containers in your home's curbside recycling cart.

## Compost

Carrot and onion peels, and celery bulbs are great for making stock, but once you've used these as much as you can, remember to compost them. Find a list of everything that can be composted as well as locate a convenient food scrap drop off site near you [here](#).

# Gift Giving



## Reduce



Gifting homemade treats and food is a great sustainable option! Have extra produce? Turn it into mini pies or jams to gift to friends.

For recipe ideas, visit [www.savemorethanfood.org/freshtakes](http://www.savemorethanfood.org/freshtakes)

## Reuse



Receive a gift you already have? Regift it! Or shop secondhand for gifts. Local thrift stores have plenty of great options for all ages.

Gift a handwritten recipe book or one of your favorite reads with a thoughtful note inside.

For wrapping, reuse packing paper from online shipments, or use the gift itself as wrapping — scarves and kitchen towels make great reusable wrap!

## Recycle



Wrapping paper with glitter, foil, or embellishments should go in the trash.

Standard glossy or matte wrapping paper can be recycled.



# Shopping



## Reduce

Plan your shopping list before heading out to avoid food waste and overbuying gifts. Consider shopping at a local farmer's market. Shop at a local refillery to help reduce packaging waste.

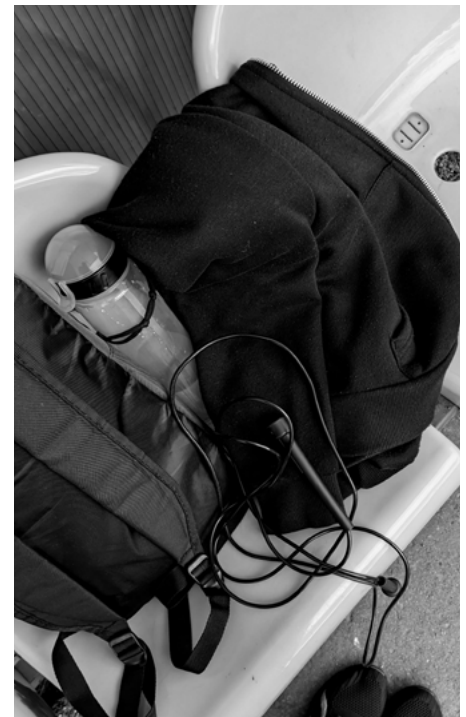
## Reuse

Shop secondhand and shop local whenever possible. Skip the store bag — bring your own reusable bag.

## Recycle

Online ordering? Be sure to recycle your cardboard by breaking down boxes first. When asked which type of bag you prefer at the grocery store- paper or plastic - opt for paper.

# Traveling

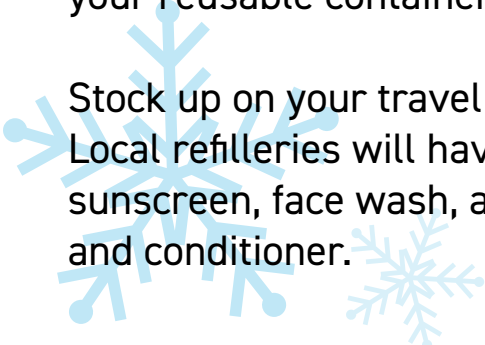


## **Carpool or use public transportation when possible.**

Planning on flying? Bring a reusable water bottle or coffee cup to help keep you sustainable during your travels.

Did you know you can bring food through TSA? Visiting family in a different state – no worries, you can still bring leftovers home! Just remember to pack your reusable container.

Stock up on your travel essentials at a refillery. Local refilleries will have your travel essentials like sunscreen, face wash, aloe vera gel, soap, shampoo and conditioner.





## Reduce

Use compostable plates or BPI-certified silverware if reusables aren't available. Take them to food waste drop-off sites.

Plan ahead for leftovers and have guests bring reusable containers to take food home.

## Reuse

Use reusable plates, cups, cutlery, and napkins. If you need extra, borrow from friends or family.

Making name cards? Repurpose scrap paper or cardboard and add a handwritten note for a personal touch.

## Recycle

Have a recycling bin handy! Items like glass jars, metal cans, and plastic bottles can be recycled.

Consider using the [Sign Maker Tool](#) to create custom signage that helps guests recycle correctly.

# Caring for the Community

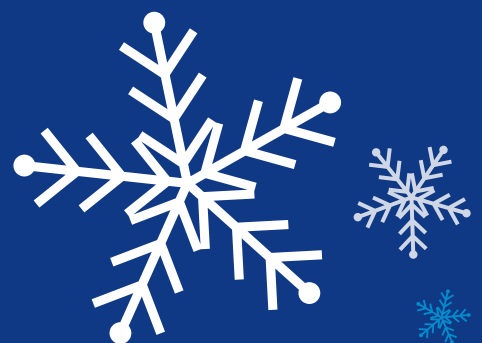


Consider donating this holiday season. Purchased too many cans of soup? Find a local shelter or food bank and donate them.

Switching to your winter wardrobe? Give your gently used items a second life by donating them to a local charity.

Give the gift of your time this year by volunteering at a new charity. Coordinate a family outing together to make memories.

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance this holiday season, please visit [FranklinCounty.org](https://FranklinCounty.org) for [food assistance](#) and [additional community support resources](#).





# Cleaning Up

## Reduce

Get creative with leftovers! Turn rolls into bread pudding (click [here](#) for a recipe and tutorial) or use bones to make a flavorful stock. For more leftover items click [here](#).

Leftover food scraps? Compost them at a nearby food waste drop-off site. Click [here](#) to find a site near you.

## Reuse

Save it! If décor or reusable plates are still in good condition, keep them for your next occasion.

## Recycle

Visit [RecycleRight.org](https://www.RecycleRight.org) to learn what can be recycled this holiday season.

Items accepted curbside include cardboard, cartons, clear plastic beverage cups, aluminum and paper cups, glass bottles and jars, metal cans, paper, pizza boxes, and plastic containers, including clamshells.

### *Specialty Items:*

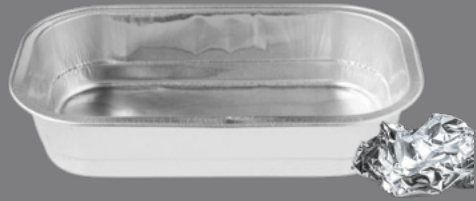
Film and stretch plastic, such as toilet paper wrapping, can be recycled at nearby grocery stores. Plastic bags, produce bags and bread bags can also be dropped off at participating stores.

Many communities offer special pickup days for live trees, wreaths and greenery. The SWACO Recycling Convenience Center will also accept live greenery. Check with your local community for details.

Holiday lights that no longer work can be brought to the SWACO Recycling Convenience Center or click [here](#) for other seasonal recycling programs and drop-off locations.

# Cheat Sheet:

## Items That Should Be Placed in the Trash



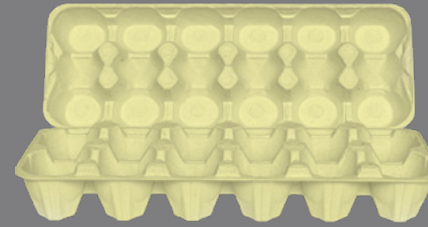
Aluminum foil



Embellished wrapping paper



Styrofoam plates and cups



Styrofoam egg cartons



Glitter



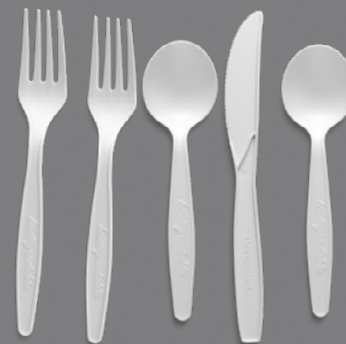
Tissue paper



Frozen food bags



Party cups



Plastic utensils



Plastic film bags



Select take-out food containers



Tape

The [SWACO Household Hazardous Waste Facility](#) and [Recycling Convenience Center](#) accept turkey fryer oil and other select items for proper disposal. Have more recycling or disposal questions? Visit [RecycleRight.org](#)



# Cheat Sheet:

## Items That Should Be Placed in the Recycling



### Recycle



Recycle Right  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE



**Paper & Cardboard**  
*Please flatten*



**Plastic Bottles & Containers**  
*Lids accepted; remove straws*



**Glass Bottles & Jars**  
*All colors accepted*



**Metal Cans & Cups**  
*Remove aerosol tips*



**Cartons**  
*Rinse and remove lids*



**Don't Bag Recyclables**  
*Keep them loose*

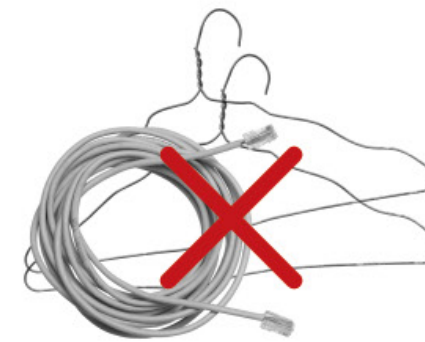
### Not Accepted



**Plastic Bags, Wrap or Film**



**Batteries, Propane Tanks or Other Flammables**



**Tanglers**  
*Hoses, wires, chains, clothing or electronics*



**Foam**  
*Cups, plates and food containers*





Wishing you a joyful,  
*sustainable*  
*holiday season.*

For additional resources, visit [www.swaco.org](http://www.swaco.org)