

lifestyle

inside

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▼ HOLIDAYS

Turn wasteful aspects of holidays into green traditions



NATALIA MORDY

This year I'm dreaming of a green Christmas. But I'm also still hoping for the traditional white Christmas.

White on the outside and green on the inside—how does that sound?

Christmas is a wonderful time as festive decorations light up the city, trees are sparkling and general cheer is spread around the community.

But where is everybody when it's time to turn off the Christmas carols and drag the tree to the curb?

No one likes the festive denouement or the garbage and waste involved.

I find it demoralizing to see the waste by the curb each week, but the garbage pick-up after Christmas really highlights the wastefulness of our society. I'll give you three tips on how to reduce your Christmas waste.



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Christmas cheer to those of you who re-use the bows and tags and fold up the paper for next year... your Christmas is getting greener. What are some other viable festive alternatives?

Gift bags are a great way to conceal those hard-to-wrap gifts and are also reusable and fairly economical.

How about using beautiful fabrics, or fabric bags?

If you don't want to wrap small gifts, why not use them as stocking stuffers?

Perhaps traditional gift wrap is your personal favourite, why not try to purchase handmade, recycled paper?

Handmade paper is usually more durable, therefore reusable and can be found at health food and stationery stores. If you have children, give them the important job of designing and creating personal gift wrap—they'll love it!

Did we consider where our artistic efforts and festive paper ends up? In the landfill—out of sight, out of mind.

Cards—how many did you receive this year?

I hope less than last Christmas, and I'm not trying to be the Grinch.

For an even greener Christmas, why not try sending those computer savvy recipients an e-card?

Most e-card websites have a multitude of occasion specific cards to choose from. You can personalize your card, choose an e-stamp, music and backgrounds.

That's more personalized than the average Christmas card. My favourite site is www.care2.com. It is a "green living" website with many appealing cards to choose from.

Another great benefit is that they arrive that day, just in case you forgot.

Another holiday waste offender is batteries.

Did you know that 40 per cent of all North American battery sales occur during the

Christmas season?

What happens once all those new toys are played out and the batteries are no longer useful? They get taken to the curb. Well, how about using rechargeables?

I used to be under the impression that they were some sort of a sub-battery, one that would cease to work almost immediately and take an eternity to recharge. I stand corrected.

Although a rechargeable kit is slightly more of an investment than batteries alone, the rechargeables earn their keep. Not only can you use them over and over, saving you money, they can be charged and ready to go in as little as 15 minutes.

For more information on rechargeable batteries or how to properly dispose of conventional ones, go to www.energizer.com. They really are a worth

while investment, so why not give them a try this year?

They would be a great stocking stuffer for that electronics-hungry loved one.

There are many ways to reduce your waste this Christmas, why not make your Christmas greener?

Health and happiness to all my readers on behalf of all of us at Immaculate Interiors Eco-Friendly Cleaning—may 2007 be your greenest year yet.

You too can have your household questions answered—or, if you have some great healthy household hints that you'd like to share, e-mail me at service@immaculateinteriors.ca. I would love to hear from you.

Natalia Mordy is an advocate for eco-friendly living, through her business, Immaculate Interiors Eco-Friendly Cleaning, 808-7774 www.immaculateinteriors.ca

A Christmas of mixed colours—green on the inside and white on the outside. See A9.