

City of Raleigh



*Things to think about this
Holiday Season*



*Home Safety • Crime Prevention
Fire Prevention • Recycling • Reuse
Sustainability • Waste Reduction*

The City of Raleigh is offering this holiday brochure as part of its continuing commitment to enhance the quality of life of all our residents.

The holidays are a time of joy for most of us, but they can also be a prime time for residential fires, increased crime and excessive waste. It is our hope that the few simple safety and sustainability tips shared here will help prevent even a minor personal or environmental holiday mishap.

Holiday Crime Prevention Tips

Holiday Shopping

-  Don't carry large amounts of cash. Never display the cash you carry. Try to use ATMs in the day time only.
-  Walk with a confident stride, and display a purposeful attitude.
-  Be aware of your surroundings. Avoid dark or secluded areas. Park in a well-lighted area as close as possible to the entrance of your destination.
-  Put all of your packages in the trunk of your car. Do not place packages on the seat or in the floor of your car where prying eyes can see them.
-  Have your keys in hand and ready to open your car door before you exit the shopping mall or place of business.
-  Always check in the back seat of your car before you get in.
-  Keep your purse closed and carry it securely under your arm. Never place your purse on a counter, leave it in your shopping cart or let your children carry it.
-  Carry as few credit cards as possible.

Holiday Traveling

- ☆ Be sure your car is in good operating condition, has plenty of gas and your spare tire is fully inflated.
- ☆ Keep a flashlight in your car's glove box.
- ☆ Make sure neighbors have a phone number so they can reach you in an emergency.
- ☆ Ask a neighbor to watch your home while you are away, and to pick up mail, newspapers and package deliveries. If possible, have your newspaper or deliveries delayed while you are away.
- ☆ Set automatic timers to activate your lights and other appliances to give your home an occupied look.
- ☆ Be sure your home is locked and that the shades, blinds and draperies are in their normal position.
- ☆ Be sure to have all your valuable items properly marked and listed in a safe location to assist law enforcement in identifying your property, should there be a theft while you are away.



Home for the Holidays

- ☆ Do not place gifts or other valuables where they can be seen by someone looking in from outside your home.
- ☆ Keep your doors and deadbolts locked at all times - even when someone is at home.
- ☆ Never let a stranger inside your home.
- ☆ Do not leave notes outside to indicate that you are away from home.
- ☆ Don't advertise your new computer, stereo or TV by leaving the empty boxes at the curb. Place gift boxes in your recycling container or recycle at a City of Raleigh drop-off center. To find a drop-off center near you visit the city's website at www.raleighnc.gov.

Holiday Fire Prevention Tips

Christmas Tree Safety

- ☆ To properly select a fresh Christmas tree, lightly grasp a branch of the tree and gently pull it through your hand. The needles should be flexible and not fall off.
- ☆ Make a fresh cut at the base of the Christmas tree, and place it in water immediately. This will help prevent it from drying out too quickly. Trees will absorb a surprising amount of water. Replenish water daily.



- ☆ Use the proper Christmas tree lights. Some lights are designed for out-door use only. All lights should be approved by an independent testing laboratory. Never use inappropriate lights with a metal tree.

- ☆ Before decorating your tree, check all lights for frayed wires, loose connections or anything that would create a potential fire hazard. If in doubt, purchase new lights.
- ☆ Plan carefully where your tree will be placed. Make sure it is at least three feet away from any heat source and not placed in front of or near any exit. Try to position your tree so it is close to an electrical outlet.
- ☆ Do not overload electrical outlets.
- ☆ Do not place any electrical or extension cords where they may trip people.
- ☆ Watch children and pets carefully when they are near the tree.
- ☆ Always unplug Christmas lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- ☆ Take down the tree soon after the holidays have passed. Place your tree at the curb for City pick-up service.
- ☆ If using an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as being fire retardant.

Heaters

- ☆ Keep space heaters at least three feet away from furniture, bedding, walls, clothing and other things that can burn.
- ☆ If using a kerosene heater, use the proper fuel. Make sure the space heater is cool before refueling. Refuel only in places with adequate ventilation.





- ☆ Make sure the type of heater you are using is legal and bears the seal of an independent testing laboratory.
- ☆ Never use extension cords with electric space heaters.

Fireplaces

- ☆ Be very careful when emptying fireplace ashes. Place them in a nonflammable container away from your residence. Add cooled wood ashes to your compost pile.
- ☆ Do not burn the wrappings from holiday packages in your fireplace.
- ☆ Have your chimney inspected by a professional at least once a year and have it cleaned if necessary.
- ☆ Burn only dry, seasoned wood. Green wood emits sparks that could easily cause a fire. Always use a fire screen.

Candles

- ☆ Never use candles or any type of open flame near Christmas trees, wreaths, curtains, combustible decorations or displays.
- ☆ Don't leave candles burning unattended or within the reach of small children. Teach children to stay away from candles, fireplaces and space heaters.

- ☆ Keep all matches and lighters out of the reach of small children. Use only child-resistant lighters.

Safe Holiday Parties

- ☆ Use only flame-retardant materials for costumes and decorations.
- ☆ Use extreme caution when using chafing dishes and Sterno.
- ☆ After holiday parties check your home thoroughly where guests may have been smoking. If dropped under furniture or behind upholstery cushions, a cigarette can smolder for hours before catching fire.
- ☆ Use deep, non-tipping ashtrays and keep a close watch on anyone who is drinking alcohol and smoking.

Fire-Safe Gifts

- ☆ When buying children's presents, carefully read labels, and avoid toys made from highly flammable materials.
- ☆ Make sure that all electrical toys bear the label of an independent testing laboratory.
- ☆ Smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers make excellent holiday gifts.



Holiday Greening Tips

Reduce

Consider these gift ideas to help reduce the amount of trash going in to the landfill.

- ☆ An adventure (a ride in a hot air balloon or train).
- ☆ An overnight stay at an Inn or B&B
- ☆ A giant edible cookie card with a holiday greeting written in the icing.
- ☆ The makings of a garden: seeds, gloves, tools, backyard composter.
- ☆ A family recipe book.
- ☆ A unique and stylish reusable shopping tote or lunch bag.
- ☆ A membership to a museum or donation to a charity or nonprofit organization in the name of a friend or family member.
- ☆ Concert, sporting event, ballet or theater tickets.
- ☆ Baby-sitting or lawn-mowing services.
- ☆ A potted plant or flowers.
- ☆ Eco-friendly toiletries, reusable razors, chemical-free soaps, natural lotions.
- ☆ A bat or bird house, or a bird feeder and seed.
- ☆ A gourmet dinner for friends or family.
- ☆ A plantable live tree, that provides an ongoing remembrance of the holidays, as well as cleans our air.



Reuse

If every family in the U.S. wrapped just three presents in re-used materials, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.

Encourage children to make their own wrapping paper by designing and coloring on grocery bags or old homework pages. Sunday comics make colorful gift wrapping for children's packages as do old posters, maps, old sheet music, and wallpaper scraps.

Add a special touch to your decorating, by using memorabilia such as a child's first shoe or teething ring, old jewelry (restring if needed), mementos from vacations, small stuffed animals and toys, holiday card ornaments, miniature toy cars, dressed up dolls, cookie cutters, or edible cookie ornaments.

Keep the fronts of old Christmas cards to use as nametags, bookmarkers, or dinner placemats.

Use Christmas stockings to wrap small gifts in; they can be reused year after year.

An old tricycle, a pair of skates or a piece of furniture, when fixed up and refinished can be a heart-warming gift to pass along as an heirloom.

Recycle

Recycling cans, glass, cardboard, paper and plastic is especially important during the holiday season. Americans throw away 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Years! That's an extra 5 million tons of trash!

Help others recycle. At your next holiday party, be sure to have a clearly marked recycling container to reduce recyclable waste.

Paper gift wrap is recyclable; just remember to remove the bow and ribbon.

After the holidays, use a cut tree to create a bird sanctuary by placing it outdoors for birds to nest in until spring or leave it out at the street for the City's weekly yard waste collection so it can be chipped into mulch.

The following items are collected year-round for recycling in Raleigh's curbside program:

- ★ glass food and beverage containers
- ★ metal food and drink cans
- ★ aluminum foil and trays
- ★ plastic bottles
- ★ plastic beverage rings
- ★ gable-top cartons
- ★ aseptic drink boxes
- ★ newspapers and all inserts
- ★ magazines and catalogs
- ★ white paper, including junk mail
- ★ corrugated cardboard pieces no larger than 3' x 3' in size
- ★ paperboard boxes and tubes



What happens every 90 days? A recycled aluminum can makes its way back on the shelf as something useful.

What lasts 80-100 years? An aluminum can that gets tossed into the trash instead of a recycling bin will take 80 to 100 years to degrade.

700 years is a long time, right? That's how long a trashed plastic bottle will sit in a landfill taking up space and slowly; very, very slowly degrading.

Alkaline Batteries

Alkaline batteries manufactured today are composed primarily of common metals - steel, zinc and manganese - and do not pose a health or environmental risk during normal use or disposal. Regular household non-rechargeable batteries, such as those used in flashlights and toys, can safely be disposed of in the garbage.

Sustainability

Sustainability addresses three fundamental principles: economic strength, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

A sustainable community is a thriving community. Here are a few tips that help bring these principles home during the holiday season.

- ☆ Look for LED (light emitting diode) holiday lights. They can use up to 95 percent less energy than standard incandescent light strands.
- ☆ Reuse holiday decorations. A whole new look can be achieved by arranging them differently.
- ☆ Avoid using one-time consumables such as paper cups, dishes, napkins and plastic eating utensils.
- ☆ Buy ingredients that are locally or regionally produced for your holiday party.
- ☆ Plan meals wisely and practice portion control to minimize waste from the beginning.
- ☆ Bring your own shopping bags to the store with you. Paper, plastic, and cloth are all good.
- ☆ Look for recycled content greeting cards and wrapping paper.
- ☆ Take any unwanted gifts in good condition to a Goodwill location or list them on local reuse sites.
- ☆ Keep your chocolate and cookie tins and reuse them as storage containers.
- ☆ If you receive electronic goods this season, don't throw your old ones in the trash. Recycle or donate them.
- ☆ At clean-up, save energy and water on the dishes by loading the dishwasher completely full.
- ☆ Make your New Year's resolution to live more sustainably in the upcoming year!





The City of Raleigh wishes everyone a happy, safe, and green holiday season.

If your guests have enjoyed your party just a bit too much, please assist them in finding a safe ride home or be a designated driver.

**Produced by the City of Raleigh
Public Affairs Department**

in association with the
Police Department Crime Prevention
and Community Relations Unit,
Fire Department Fire Prevention
Office, the Office of Sustainability, and the
Solid Waste Services Department.

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www.raleighnc.gov

October 2010