

The Big Holiday Cleanup

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Announcement

Recycling stations throughout the district are preparing for their 'black Fridays', the post-holiday dash to eliminate the unwanted parts of the gift giving season- the wrapping paper, ribbons, boxes, the Styrofoam, the tree. The unwanted parts of the feast- the carcass, the peels, nuts shells, the strange fruitcake gift no one wants to eat. And all the 'old stuff' that is being replaced by the shiny new stuff.

There are a few things to keep in mind when you are preparing for phase two of the holiday season, aka "The Big Cleanup" First, remember we require residents to sort all materials so maybe prepare ahead of time. Check out our website for town specific guidance. <https://www.nekwmd.org/district-towns> Second, not all gift wraps can be recycled. Before stuffing all the paper into a big bag to recycle, please, sort it all out. We do not accept glittery, shiny, plastic coated, or metallic wrapping paper. **IT CANNOT BE RECYCLED.** Remove bows and ribbons from the gift wrap. All those pretty additions can be saved for next year or put in the trash. I love my ribbon collection that spans many holidays, it's both useful and nostalgic. Under the gift wrap is usually cardboard or boxboard. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE FOAM, PLASTIC FILM, TWIST TIES, OR OTHER MATERIALS IN THE BOXES.** Boxes should be broken down. If they contain anything it should just be more broken-down cardboard/boxboard.

Third, if you are going to bring your once fresh Christmas tree anywhere to be chipped or dropped off at a farm to feed goats, be sure it has **NOTHING** on it. No tinsel, no lights, no trimmings. The tree should be like the day you brought it home, naked.

Fourth, Styrofoam should have no tape, labels, or other stuff on it. **NO PACKING PEANUTS.** Please take foam out boxes and be sure to sort properly.

Fifth, remember you can compost all leftover food scraps including meat and cheese. **NO LIQUIDS, DRAIN THINGS LIKE SOUP FIRST BEFORE COMPOSTING.** Keep the plastic utensils and bags out of the bin, those are trash. If the food is still good, consider donating it to the many food shelves or meal sites in your area. There are hungry people out there who would truly appreciate it.

Sixth, as you are making room for all the new goodies you were gifted, remember repurposing can keep stuff out of the landfill. One person's trash can be someone's treasure. Old clothes, nothing wet or moldy, and accessories/shoes of all types can go into any Apparel Impact bin. Use the locator tool to find a bin near you at <https://www.apparelimpact.com/nearestbin>. Or donate stuff to places like HOPE in Lyndonville or Salvation Army, they are always looking for decent household items and clothes. St. Jay Hub is also looking especially for computers, phones, headphones, and tablets that still work. You'll get a tax write off and help someone in your community get much needed technology- <https://www.stjcommunityhub.org/services-9>. There are many places and people who would take donations in your area, just look. Generosity can be so simple.

Seventh, remember our services in Lyndonville and all the various stations are for the residents of district towns only. Towns choose to be members of the NEK district. If you live in a town not in our district, you should call your town clerk or go to the town's website to find out what your options are.

Happy holidays to you all, no matter where you reside on this planet. Peace on Earth, goodwill towards our home, our only home- its water, its soil, its humans, its flora, and its fauna.