



**KENT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS**

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Stay off the naughty list with Kent County DPW's Holiday Waste Guide

*Wrapping paper, bubble wrap and Christmas lights are just a few items
that cannot be recycled*

Grand Rapids, Mich. – Wrapping paper, bubble wrap and Christmas lights are just a few items that should not go in recycling bins this holiday season, **Kent County Department of Public Works** announced today as part of its [2018 Holiday Waste Guide](#).

“While the holiday season is a time for gift giving, holiday parties and family dinners, it’s also the time of year when our waste drastically increases – almost by 25 percent nationwide,” said **Lauren Westerman**, Kent County DPW’s Resource Recovery educator. “We’re asking everyone to be aware of what can go into their recycling bins this holiday season and take steps to reduce their waste, recycle and donate old items.”

The Kent County DPW estimates that by the end of 2018 residents will have recycled **500,000 Christmas trees-worth of paper, enough aluminum to make 74,000 tabletop Menorahs and steel to make 53,000 Radio Flyer wagons**. To help reduce and recycle even more waste this holiday season, Kent County DPW encourages residents to follow these dos and don’ts:

DO bring reusable shopping bags. Remember to bring reusable bags when Christmas shopping or going to any store, not just the grocery store.

DO NOT recycle wrapping or tissue paper. Wrapping and tissue paper cannot be recycled because it’s low-quality paper that paper mills can’t use to make new paper products. Reduce use of wrapping paper this holiday season by using other creative materials to wrap gifts, such as old maps, colorful cloth or old gift bags.

DO separate packaging. From plastic to cardboard to strings and zip ties, it’s important to separate packaging materials before recycling them. For example, if a toy comes in a plastic package that also has cardboard, make sure to separate both materials before recycling.

DO NOT throw away electronics. Before throwing away old appliances, gaming systems or other electronics, visit Kent County DPW’s [recycling guide](#).

DO recycle glass bottles. Remember to rinse all glass bottles before placing them in a recycling bin.

DO NOT recycle artificial Christmas trees. Instead, donate them to thrift stores. For those who put up real trees, remember to remove all ornaments, tinsel and other decorations before taking them to a local drop off site.

The Kent County DPW also reminds residents to safely dispose of hazardous materials such as fireworks, cooking oil, propane tanks and ammunition by taking these items to a local drop-off center for safe disposal. These items should never be placed in a trash or recycling bin. For drop-off locations, visit www.reimaginetrash.org.

For a full list of holiday waste and recycling tips, [download Kent County DPW's guide here](#).

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