

RECYCLING AFTER CHRISTMAS

It's amazing, I thought we could recycle all Christmas wrapping paper until I read an article about people in England who were facing £1000 fines after local authorities hired "bin bobbies" to rummage through householders recycling bins to make sure that families hadn't put Christmas gift wrapping paper in the recycling bin!

Gift wrapping paper is often coated with plastic or foil which makes it impossible to recycle.

Traditional wrapping paper that does not have plastic-coated, metallic or flashy hologram finishes can be recycled, but sticky tape, bows, ribbon and cardboard gift-cards have to be removed first as these can damage recycling machines.

So treading safely here's a short guide....

- Run Christmas paper through your shredder to use as packaging materials later or animal bedding. Try out using wrapping paper to clean windows, leaving them streak free. Give the paper to the kids to make cut outs and art projects.
- Recycle your tree! Think about it, if everyone recycled their tree after Christmas, just this year alone, the number of trees that would not go into a landfill would be astounding.
- Many communities have started Christmas tree recycling programmes; check your area to see what is available.
- If you live outside the city, and have a wood burning fireplace, cut up your Christmas tree and burn it for heat.
- If you have a wood chipper or friends with one, make mulch out of the Christmas tree.
- Don't throw away your Christmas cards. Try some creative crafts and have some fun. Cut a rectangle off of the front of Christmas cards and use for next year's gift tags or make bookmarks with cards.
- If you got a new mobile phone send your old one to a charity. Rehab & the Jack & Jill Foundation will recycle them for you.
- Take your used batteries with you on your next trip to the supermarket as they all have battery collection boxes

It's worth remembering that almost anything can be recycled these days, from computers to mobile phones, so try to make recycling a lifestyle choice wherever possible. And with an unsettled financial climate it might be worth remembering a past mantra that has real resonance for the present times:

Make Do and Mend....