



# Sustainability Newsletter

December 2016

## Have an Eco-Friendly Holiday Season!

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This holiday season, why not try and minimize the amount of waste you create? Wrap presents with reusable materials where possible and try to recycle your discarded wrapping paper (some recycling facilities don't accept it). Try and source food locally for big holiday feasts and serve dinner on ceramic plates with cloth napkins. Be sure to save the turkey (or ham) bones for soup! Don't forget to turn your Christmas lights off before you go to bed (or put them on a timer). These little changes will help make your holiday season a little greener.

### Transfer Station and Landfill Holiday Closures

Transfer Stations will be  
**CLOSED** on:

- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- New Years Day

Burns Lake Transfer Station  
Southside Transfer Station  
Area 'D' Transfer Station  
Vanderhoof Transfer Station  
Fort St. James Transfer Station  
Smithers-Telkwa Transfer Station  
Granisle Transfer Station

Landfills will be **CLOSED** on:

- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- New Years Day

Knockholt Landfill  
Clearview Landfill



# Christmas Trees: Real vs. Fake



The question about the greenest Christmas tree has been one of considerable debate among environmentally conscious merry-makers for the past decade. Both sides have made valid points: advocates of artificial trees take issue with the practice of cutting down trees in the name of festivity, whereas proponents of real trees argue that it's pretty much impossible for a plastic alternative to be green.

According to research, the real tree emerges victorious! The artificial tree has three times more impacts on climate change and resource depletion than the natural tree. That's assuming your artificial tree lasts six years. If your tree will last more than 20 years and if you have to drive a long way to buy a real tree, the opposite becomes true.

Here's a list of options, including real and artificial:

## Real Christmas trees

1. Buy local.
2. Choose trees from farms that minimize (or do without) pesticides and herbicides.
3. Cut your own with a provincial permit, from lands that must be kept clear anyway.

## Artificial Christmas trees

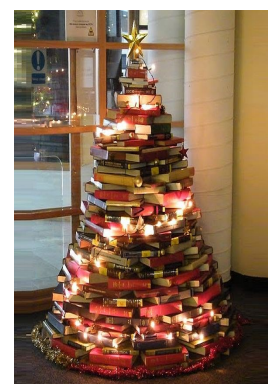
1. Avoid PVCs — the grinchiest of plastics—that most artificial trees are made of. Not only are these hard on the environment, they're bad for your health.
2. Make it last 20 years!

## Potted evergreens

If you have the space, start a Christmas tree forest! How to care for a potted tree:

1. Don't keep the tree inside for more than a week (two at the most!).
2. Water generously.
3. Place the tree outside in the yard until the spring thaw, then plant it.

Want an even more eco-friendly option? Try one of these non-traditional Christmas tree alternatives:



Reclaimed pallets make great options

Driftwood Tree

Book tree



# Eco-friendly DIY Christmas Decorations

You might already have everything you need for these simple DIY Christmas decorations! Most of the crafts below repurposes a material that might otherwise be thrown away.



## Clove Oranges

Wrap ribbon around the orange, twisting at the base. Tie a simple overhand knot to secure the ribbon in place. Press cloves into your orange. Hang it on your tree or put several in a bowl.



## Scrabble Word Decorations

Spell festive words or family members' names with some old scrabble letters, some ribbon and a glue gun.



## Cork Reindeer Decorations

To make these, you will need a few corks, some twigs and red pom-poms for the nose. Cut the twigs to size, poke holes in the corks and hot glue the legs and antlers in place.



## Bottle Cap Snowmen

Save your bottle caps! Paint three bottle caps white, and using a hot glue gun, glue all three to a piece of ribbon. Draw on a snowman face. You could also use ribbon, felt, buttons or yarn as scarves, hats, etc.



## Christmas Card Garland

Put all of your past year's Christmas cards to good use before you recycle them. With some scissors, a hole punch and some string, you can make a festive garland for your mantle.



## Twig Christmas Trees

With a few twigs, a drill with a small bit, a saw and some ribbon, you can make these eco-friendly Christmas tree ornaments.



## Cinnamon Ornament Dough

Mix 1 cup applesauce and 1 3/4 cups of powdered cinnamon. Knead into a dough with your hands. Roll out into a sheet about 0.5 cm thick. Cut out shapes from the dough with cookie cutters. Lay out on a kitchen towel to dry for 24 hours. Keep them in a warm room and turn them over every few hours to stop them from warping too much.

# Reduce your Ecological Footprint this Holiday Season

## **Gifts**

Why not give the gift of experience? Concert/event tickets, a camping trip, cooking classes or a massage are all low-waste gift ideas. Experience-type gifts suitable for kids include museum/theatre memberships or a ski trip.

## **Charity Donations**

Why not donate to an environmental charity in someone's name? To make the choice a little easier, check out this guide to see how the listed charities spend donations:

<https://charityintelligence.ca/environmental-charities>.

## **Decorations**

Try your hand at making some of the decorations in this newsletter. Get creative using the materials you already have on hand! Decorating with spruce/pine boughs and other plants is a great idea, as they bring nature inside and can also be composted when you are done with them.

## **Lighting**

Switch to LED (light-emitting diodes) Christmas lights. They last 7 times longer and use 1/10th the energy of incandescent lights! Shutting off your lights before you go to bed will also reduce energy usage overnight.

## **Holiday Meals**

Be sure to serve all of your meals with reusable plates, cutlery, glasses and napkins. Use locally produced food if possible, and only cook enough for the people you invite to avoid unnecessary food waste. If you have leftovers, have your guests take some home, or refrigerate them and eat all leftovers within a few days.

## Homemade Cranberry Sauce + What to do with all the Leftovers!

Homemade cranberry sauce is a necessity for holiday turkey meals, but what do you do with all the leftovers? Below you'll find a healthy recipe for cranberry sauce along with some ideas for using the remainder after the holiday season.



### **Cranberry Sauce**

#### **Ingredients:**

2 12 oz. bags of fresh cranberries  
¾ cup pineapple juice or orange juice  
½ cup of unsweetened applesauce  
½ cup of water  
Juice and zest of one orange  
3-4 tablespoons of honey or to taste

#### **Directions:**

1. Put cranberries, pineapple juice, applesauce and water in a sauce pan and bring to a boil.
2. Keep on medium heat, stirring constantly until the cranberries start to explode (about 10-15 minutes).
3. Reduce to a simmer and pour the orange juice and zest over the cranberry mixture.
4. Simmer 10-15 minutes and remove from heat.
5. Cool completely and store in fridge at least 4 hours before serving.

#### **Now for the leftovers:**

- Try a ½ cup of cranberry sauce in a fruit smoothie.
- Puree the cranberry sauce and use it as jam in thumbprint cookies.
- Use it as a filling in turnovers.
- Add some maple syrup to thin out the cranberry sauce and use it as a pancake topping.
- Leave it thick and use it as a cheesecake topping.