

# Talkin' Trash *With Chris McCullough*



**Chris McCullough**

## How to Make Your Holiday Party Recycling Friendly

For your New Year's party, or next holiday or sporting party, why not encourage

recycling while educating your guests in a suggestive, non-offensive way?

With each holiday come parties, and with parties come trash. So don't forget that even at a party, everyone likes to pitch in and make a difference.

In the 5 weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, household waste increases by more than 25 percent. Added food waste, shopping bags, packaging, wrapping paper, bows and ribbons, disposable plates, cups, and flatware — it all adds up to an additional 1 million tons a week to our landfills nationwide. There are various ways you can encourage recycling at your parties by making it easy and readily available.

### Make it easy

The best way to make your gathering more eco-friendly is to make it obvious and easy to recycle. Instead of having five trashcans throughout the house or meeting space, place containers clearly marked for recycling. Place these containers in obvious spots that are easy and convenient to use. For example, place a recycling container by the food table, in the kitchen and other places people are going to sit and chat.

Have only one trashcan in a central location where people can discard any non-recyclable material. Make

sure to place recycle bins next to the trashcan with a sign on the trashcan that says, "Can I be recycled?" with arrows pointing toward the recycling containers. You may also want to have a bin next to the trashcan for unused food that can be used in your backyard compost or to use as food for your pets or livestock. You should adopt the mantra "No can stands alone", meaning where you have a trash can, you should always offer a recycling opportunity. When given the opportunity to recycle, most people choose to do the right thing.

To make sure you are up to date on what can be recycled here in Douglas County, log onto [www.RecyclePower.org](http://www.RecyclePower.org).

### Use recycled goods

Buy or use recycled items for your decorations, dishware and gift-wrapping. Avoid spending money on new items as much as possible, as this will only add to the waste accumulated by holiday season. Use or make decorations from everyday household items such as brown paper bags. Purchase recycled paper or plastic dishware that can be recycled again. You can find products made from recycled materials at most stores these days. By purchasing goods made from recycled material, you are contributing to an economy that embraces recycling.

### Our grandparents had it right

We have become a society that in many instances values convenience over stewardship. Don't forget what our grandparents taught us about conservation and savings; by reusing

something you will always save money, and in many instances time.

This is no less true when it comes to dishes. By using durable glasses, plates, bowls, flatware, linen, and serving containers you do not have to purchase replacements. You also have to manage less trash, make a significantly smaller impact on the environment, save money, and set a better example to your guests and children.

Even if you recycle any plastic dishware or compost paper plates and napkins (which you should), you are still spending the extra money on disposable while continuing to consume energy and natural resources which otherwise could have been avoided by employing the example set by our grandparents

### Do the dirty work

Unfortunately, most good deeds come with sacrifice, and at the end of the night someone will have to rummage through the recycling and trash to make sure things ended up where they belong. Have someone, or you yourself, go through each recycling bin to make sure that there isn't any trash thrown in it by mis-

take. Separate the plastic, paper, metal, and glass and give it a quick rinse if necessary. Then go through the trashcan as well and pull out any recyclable items that accidentally got thrown out.

Make note if there are any items that you can compost, such as used coffee and tea, food contaminated paper or food byproducts. Used coffee and tea are great for a garden or as a soil conditioner. Food laden paper and food byproducts make great additions to compost. Try to eliminate as much waste as possible by finding creative and innovative ways to use the stuff left over. Everything else either needs to go into the trash, compost, or the recycling bin.

Your holiday party this season doesn't have to add to the waste that Americans produce during the season. By implementing a few simple ideas and a little work to your party, you can encourage recycling and make a difference this year and the years to come. It's these small steps combined that can make a real impact on people, our community, and our world.

Don't forget to reduce, reuse, and recycle to "Trash Douglas County Less!"

## OAKLAND LOCKERS

	Whole Ham \$2 <sup>19</sup> lb	
	Half Ham \$2 <sup>29</sup> lb	
	Smoked Turkey \$2 <sup>59</sup> lb	

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