

Post-Holiday Waste Disposal Options

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[Solid Waste Management](#)



Resolve to Recycle and Dispose Responsibly

The holidays often bring lots of fancy, new, shiny things into our lives. This also means older items are often displaced and need to be disposed along with lots of cardboard and packaging materials. New items of the electronic variety, decorations and lights require special disposal.

E-waste

Don't leave old electronics around the house to collect dust and take up space. Technology changes rapidly and it can be tough to find a new home for old electronics also known as e-waste. If there is no donation alternative, the safest and most responsible disposal for e-waste is at a designated e-waste drop off location. For proper disposal or recycling, free of charge, Prince William residents can safely and easily dispose of these outdated items (up to three items per visit) at the Prince William County Landfill on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

E-waste is not acceptable in the trash or traditional single stream recycling. E-waste is a dangerous material to dispose of improperly and irresponsibly due to toxic heavy metals such as mercury, lead and corrosive chemicals. These substances can cause serious damage when they are disposed of in the trash and subsequently end up in the landfill. When this happens, chemicals can seep (or leach) into surrounding groundwater potentially causing serious harm to individuals, as well as the environment.

For example, lithium-ion batteries, which are in many electronic devices, can cause dangerous truck fires, while mercury-containing devices can break and cause the release of hazardous waste. Regular batteries as well lithium-ion, nickel cadmium and other household batteries can be disposed of at the County Landfill or Balls Falls Road Compost Facility battery center any day.

Decorations and Lights

Old holiday decorations such as string lights, should not be placed in the recycling bin. These items are considered "tanglers" and create problems for recycling centers. String lights should be placed in the trash or look for a specialty recycler using Earth911.com search feature. Holiday

decorations still in good conditions may be donated to a reuse organization like Good Will, Habitat Restore, or others. [A list of Prince William area reuse establishments](#) is on the Prince William Solid Waste website.

Packaging

Cardboard shipping boxes leftover from holiday online shopping and gift boxes that are no longer needed, can be recycled with curbside recycling. Larger boxes must be flattened and cut to a 2' by 2' size or smaller. Be sure to remove all the packing material. Paper packing material can also be placed in curbside recycling along with most plain wrapping paper. Styrofoam® inserts and packing peanuts should be placed in the garbage. Remove the air from plastic air pillows and recycle them with plastic bags at grocery stores and other retailers or place them in the trash. Bubble wrap can also be recycled with plastic bags.

The Solid Waste Division provides a variety of services to make the safe and proper disposal of unwanted household items easy and convenient for Prince William County residents. In most cases, these services are free of charge. Make a resolution to donate, discard and dispose of trash, recyclables, and potentially hazardous e-waste in an environmentally responsible manner. Use the Solid Waste [A to Z Disposal Guide](#) for disposal advice on more than 300 items.