

Handling Holiday Leftovers

By now all the gifts have been opened, the holiday decorations and lights are starting to come down and maybe you've already taken your tree to one of the many recycling drop-off spots around town. But what are you going to do with all the rest of your holiday leftovers? I'm talking about those big corrugated cardboard boxes, gift wrap and gift boxes, holiday cards and envelopes, white block foam packaging, holiday light strings...you get the idea! Luckily we've got local places to take this stuff, so it can be turned into new materials and kept out of our landfill:

Corrugated cardboard boxes can be recycled at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center, even if they have large staples or shiny graphics on them. Corrugated cardboard boxes have three layers: two outer layers that sandwich the central wavy layer. You'll need to flatten these boxes before putting them in the cardboard container.

Paper shopping bags and gift bags are great for reuse, but if they're too worn, they can be recycled with your corrugated cardboard (including white, colored, glossy or non-glossy bags). Please remove all non-paper handles (string, etc.). Is this something I've written? I'm not sure that's the best bin for them.

Gift boxes can also be recycled at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center. These boxes have a single layer and are made of the same material as a tissue box or cereal box. The shiny graphics are ok.

Gift wrap is a low-grade material because of its high clay and ink content and low fiber content. It is normally considered a contaminant, but for a limited time until January 31st, you can put your wrapping paper in the "Paperboard" container at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center. Please do not include metallic wrapping paper, ribbons, bows, ornaments, tissue paper, fluorescent or dark paper, or paper covered with tape. Remember to reuse any gift wrap that is still in good condition!

Holiday cards and white or pastel colored envelopes can be recycled in the "Office Paper and Opened Mail" box at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center, as long as you've removed any non-paper material (such as metallic embossing or envelope liners, ribbons, glitter, etc). Please do not recycle envelopes or paper that has been saturated in dark dyes. A quick test to identify these items is to tear the paper – if the dark red or green color can be seen throughout the paper, do not recycle it. If the torn edge reveals white paper on the inside, feel free to recycle it, even if the outside is brightly colored or glossy.

White block foam that came as packaging for your new computer, TV, toys, wine, etc. and has the #6 on it can be taken to the Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM) at 5030 "old Pearl" St. in Boulder. For a full list of what other hard-to-recycle materials can be accepted, see: <http://ecocycle.org/charm> or call 303-444-6634.

Please note: if you have curbside recycling service, you'll need to check with your individual trash hauler to see what materials they'll accept for recycling. Have more questions? You can always give me a call at 303-404-2839 or you can stop in the Education Center at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center to ask and pick up our Holiday Recycling Guide. You can also find our holiday guide online, as well as some helpful video clips that explain how to recycle more holiday items at <http://www.eco-cycle.org/seasonal/winter/index.cfm>. This New Year you can become part of the *solution* by helping our community reduce, reuse and recycle! If you're interested in making a difference and becoming involved with Eco-Cycle, please join our Volunteer Training on Wednesday, January 17th at 6:30pm at the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center (225 Commerce St.). We'd love to meet you!

Genevieve George is Eco-Cycle's Broomfield Outreach Coordinator. To learn more about recycling or the Eco-Cycle/Broomfield Recycling Center, call (303)404-2839 or e-mail genevieve@ecocycle.org