

Christmas Waste & Festive Footprint

Written by Jayne Bailey

Friday, 11 December 2009 11:10 - Last Updated Monday, 21 December 2009 11:02

In Gloucestershire we generate nearly 30,000 tonnes of waste- that's a staggering 10% of the year's total rubbish during the Christmas holiday period. It amounts to an extra five sacks of waste for a typical family!

During the party season, it is predicted that Gloucestershire residents will use an extra seven million glass bottles and jars. These can be easily recycled. All of the district authorities collect them, as part of their door-to-door collection scheme. They can also be taken to your local Recycling Bank or Household Recycling Centre, which will be open every day throughout the holiday period excluding Christmas Day and New Years Day. Full details are on www.recyclef.orgloucestershire.com

The amount of wrapping paper estimated to be thrown away in the UK this Christmas could stretch around the equator nine times or to the moon if each sheet was laid end to end! Why not use string to tie up parcels, so that the paper can be reused.

The average household in Gloucestershire will spend nearly £170 on food during the festive period alone, and around a third of this will be thrown away. Why not order a free copy of our cook book, providing many recipe ideas on what to do with your food leftovers including all of that extra turkey? Log on to www.recycleforgloucestershire.com/news_events/2009/cookbook/index.html

Whilst preparing the Christmas dinner we create a mountain of waste, including peelings from 240 million sprouts; 105 million potatoes and 20 million carrots across the UK. Why not start home composting? You can make use of all that additional uncooked food waste (excluding meat and fish). If you make a start now, you could have some good compost for your garden by the summer. Prices for compost bins start from £12 plus £5 postage and packaging. Visit www.recycleforgloucestershire.com for more details.

This year each person will spend on average £425 on Christmas presents. More than £90 of this will be spent on unwanted gifts! Pass on your unwanted gifts to a local charity shop, or offer them on the web for free via www.freecycle.org.uk or <http://ilovefreegle.org/>

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If you've been inundated with junk mail this Christmas, contact the Mailing Preference Service to remove your name from mailing lists. Register online at www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/ or call 020 7291 3310.

Finally, if you have any small electrical items you no longer want, don't bin it, bring it to your local Household Recycling Centre.

Cllr Stan Waddington, Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: "As you can see from these statistics, there will be a mind-blowing amount of waste generated over the festive period. Where possible, we encourage residents to reduce, reuse and recycle to reduce the impact on the environment."