

# Did you know that packaging increases by 30% over the Christmas period?



Much of this packaging is recyclable so make sure you have a green Christmas and New Year and recycle the extra packaging that is around your house. To help you get started, as you mean to continue for the rest of 2012, have a look at the A to Z guide below that gives some simple and practical advice of how you and your family can become 'Greener' not just at Christmas but for the full year ahead.

## The A to Z Tips for a Green 2012

**Aluminium** is not just used in drinks cans, don't forget the Aluminium trays - from mince pies and your take-away food trays. Just make sure these items are clean and dry. In Wicklow we will have used 2.5 million cans by the end of the season.

**Bottle Banks** with over a million bottles used in county Wicklow over Christmas this puts a lot of extra strain on the bottle bank service. Do not leave your bottles on the ground in boxes or bags at the bottle bank - it is a litter offence leaving you open to potential prosecution.

**Christmas Crackers** and Christmas Cards are recyclable and remember to make sure all the cardboard and paper is clean and dry.

**Decorations** should be stored for reuse next year.

**Electrical items and batteries** - make sure you recycle your used batteries and electrical goods. Shops selling batteries must now provide collection boxes to recycle old batteries. These are usually small blue boxes located close to the tills or information desks in store. Recycle any old or broken electrical items in your local recycling centres or by returning them to an electrical shop when purchasing new ones.

**Food waste** is a huge problem at Christmas. Use all your leftovers in new dinners and check out [www.StopFoodWaste.ie](http://www.StopFoodWaste.ie) for more information and recipes. There is a new Christmas Recipe book available to help on website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie).

**Glass:** Keep separate for recycling at the bottle bank or recycling centre. Put each glass bottle into the correct bank for its colour. Mixing up the colours lowers the quality of recyclable glass.

**Hazardous waste collections** are held in different locations around the county during the year. Check out the locations near you.

**Invest in a composter** or water butt this year...both will save you money and be good for the environment.

**Jars:** Don't forget to recycle your used Jars - such as mayonnaise, cranberry and pickled sauce jars. Clean out your glass jars to get rid of any left over food.

**K is for keeping your curtains closed.** This keeps heat in and saves energy and money. And with all those guests to entertain, more heat is going to be generated anyway.

**Christmas Tree Lights** left on for 10 hours a day over the 12 days of Christmas produce enough CO2 to inflate 12 balloons, so turn them off when they are not

needed. If you want to be more environmentally friendly, try switching to either LED lights, choosing lights that are powered by solar power or rechargeable batteries, or installing an energy-saving bulb to offset the energy usage. If you haven't already - make it a new year's resolution to switch to energy-efficient light bulbs.

**Mobile phones:** Recycle your old phones by giving them to one of the many local charities like the Jack and Jill foundation.

**Newspapers:** Get all those papers and magazines to the recycling centre.

**Old clothes and bric-a-brac:** Get yours to the local charity shop. You can always use our Oxfam Shop at the Wicklow Recycling Centre or the Five Loaves Shop at the Bray Centre.

**Plastic bottles:** Make sure all these are recycled, even the shampoo and ketchup bottles!

**Questions:** If you have any about recycling, reducing your waste or saving energy, contact the Environmental Awareness Office on 1890 222276.

**Resolution:** Make your new year's Resolution to Reduce the waste you have in 2012.

**Save money** by having less waste and using less energy...and help save the Environment at the same time.

**Tree:** If you have a real Christmas tree you can recycle it at one of the many designated locations in the county.

**Unwanted Gifts:** When the festivities are over bring any unwanted gifts of clothes or toys to your local charity shop or give them away online through sites such as [www.free-trade.ie](http://www.free-trade.ie).

**Vegetables:** Start a composter and recycle all your vegetable peelings and garden cuttings - composting turns spoil into soil! Why not start a Veg Patch in 2012?

**Wrapping paper:** Don't forget to recycle the used Wrapping paper. Better still, fold it carefully and use it again next year.

All that **eXtra cardboard** needs to be clean and dry until you bring it to the recycling centre. It's no good if it's wet.

You are the answer to the environmental problems we face...*Reduce, Reuse and Recycle* as much as you can and that goes for water and energy as well as waste.

**Zzzz's .....** Remember to catch up on your sleep over the Christmas...it's been a tough year for all of us!

