

Recycle, Reuse & Rejoice...

A common mistake many people make around the holidays is loading their recycling bins with wrapping paper, tissue, ribbons, and more. Unfortunately, shiny, laminated papers are, in fact, not recyclable in most circumstances. Including it in the bin with other paper products can make an entire load unrecyclable.

Recyclable items:

Unlaminated paper-based wrapping paper and pre-recycled wrapping paper are usually recyclable. The Sunday comics or brown paper with stamped or hand-drawn patterns are always a good alternate resource for wrapping presents, and lend a nostalgic feel to presents.

A good way to test for recyclability, according to the BBC, is to crush wrapping paper into a ball. If it stays bunched up, it is more than likely recyclable.

Items that may not be recycled:

If wrapping paper is metallic, has glitter on it, or has a texture (flocking, fuzzy spots, etc.) to it, it is not recyclable. Any wrapping paper that contains glossy foil, even if it has just a small amount of foil in it, is not recyclable. When the paper dissolves during the recycling process, the foil remains in threads that can gum up the machines.

Other decorative features of gifts are not recyclable include tissue paper, decorative ribbons, bows, and glitter-laden holiday cards. These items create nightmares for recycling centers.

Other holiday items:

- Real Christmas trees can be put out at the curb as is, without a bag (check with your city's local ordinances before doing so, just to be sure). You might consider using the boughs to mulch around plants, however.
- Poinsettias usually will continue to grow and stay healthy long after Christmas, or can be put out with your Christmas tree.

By following these guidelines when putting your trash out to the curb, your trash collectors and recycling centers will be able to more efficiently process holiday trash.

