

Holiday Hints

Dreaming Of A Green Christmas

(NAPSA)—Although the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Partners for Environmental Progress report that Americans throw away 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than at any other time, you can celebrate the holidays in green fashion. Here's how in three areas: improving a home before guests arrive, decorating it for the holidays and selecting gifts.

Home Improvements

According to a survey by The Home Depot, nearly half of Americans take on home improvement projects for the Thanksgiving and winter holidays. If you're among them, keep these tips in mind:

- Replace old appliances with Energy Star-qualified ones, which incorporate advanced technologies that use 10 to 50 percent less energy and water than standard models. If just one in 10 homes used such appliances, the change would be equivalent to planting 1.7 million acres of new trees.

- Replacing incandescent light-bulbs in the five most-used fixtures in a home with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) can save you a lot of money. If every American household did this, we would save close to \$8 billion a year in energy costs and would prevent the greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions from nearly 10 million cars, according to EnergyStar.gov.

- A running toilet can waste up to two gallons of water per minute. The solution is often as simple as replacing the flapper. Or you can install a new high-efficiency toilet with the EPA's new WaterSense label. These use at least 20 percent less water than standard 1.6-gallon toilets while meeting flushing performance guidelines.

- Heating water is the third-



SPRUNGING UP FOR CHRISTMAS YET TO COME: For every real Christmas tree harvested, up to three seedlings are planted in its place the following spring.

largest energy expense in most homes and accounts for approximately 14 percent of your utility bill. By installing a Paloma Tankless Water Heater, a homeowner can save up to 25 percent on fuel. Tankless water heaters eliminate waste, since they operate on demand and they heat only as much hot water as needed.

- Look for home improvement products that have less of an impact on the environment than conventional ones. For example, those with the Eco Options logo contribute to sustainable forestry, energy efficiency, water conservation, clean air or a healthy home.

Decorating Trees and Lights

- Today, nearly all the trees sold at seasonal Christmas tree lots are grown on tree farms, so forests aren't hurt by choosing a cut tree. According to the National Christmas Tree Association, for every real Christmas tree harvested, up to three seedlings are planted in its place the following spring.

- Christmas lights made with light-emitting diodes (LEDs) are 80 percent more efficient than tradi-

tional Christmas lights. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, if every household replaced conventional holiday light strings with LEDs, at least 2 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity could be saved in a month. The savings would be enough to power 200,000 homes for a year. According to the Alliance to Save Energy, if you use 10 strands of LEDs instead of conventional lights, you'll save about \$174 in energy bills.

- Turn off or unplug holiday lights during the day or put them on a timer. This will save energy and help your lights last longer.

Going Green with Gift Giving

- According to the EPA, about 40 percent of all battery sales occur during the holiday season. Buy rechargeable batteries to accompany your electronic gifts, and consider giving a battery charger as well. Rechargeable batteries reduce the amount of potentially harmful materials thrown away and can save money in the long run.

- Appliances and electronics with the Energy Star label can cut related home energy bills up to 30 percent and make great gifts.

- Recycle holiday gift wrap. If every family reused just two feet of holiday ribbon, the 38,000 miles of ribbon saved could tie a bow around the entire planet.

- Wrap gifts in reusable cloth bags, reuse wrapping paper or simply wrap your gift in newspaper or grocery bags.

You can find products with the Eco-Options logo and a wide variety of home improvement and home decor items for the holidays and beyond at The Home Depot.

Learn More

For more tips and decorating ideas or to find a store, visit www.homedepot.com.