



# Down to Brass Tacks

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BRASS TACKS INITIATIVE



## Eco-Friendly Festivities: Answering Questions About Holiday Recycling.

As the holiday season approaches, it's important to keep in mind the impact of our festivities on the environment. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, household waste increases by more than 25% from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. To ensure eco-friendly celebrations, the Brass Tacks Initiative has compiled a guide to holiday recycling, addressing common questions and providing tips for minimizing waste.

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*Can I recycle Christmas lights?*

Christmas lights are considered "tangles" and are not recyclable through traditional curbside recycling, as they can damage sorting equipment. However, many hardware, home improvement, or electronics stores offer Christmas light recycling programs, or you can check with your local recycling center for disposal options.

*What should I do with wrapping paper?*

While plain wrapping paper can typically be recycled, certain types, such as metallic or glitter-coated, are not recyclable. To reduce waste, consider alternatives like reusable gift bags or fabric.

*Are gift bags recyclable?*

Like wrapping paper, the recyclability of gift bags varies based on the material. Paper gift bags are generally recyclable, while those made of plastic or mixed materials may not be. Consider reusing sturdy gift bags for future occasions.

*How do I dispose of old holiday cards?*

Cards made entirely of paper are usually recyclable. Alternatively, consider repurposing them into gift tags or donating them to schools or community centers for craft projects.

*Can I recycle bows and ribbons?*

Bows and ribbons are often not recyclable due to their mixed materials. *(continued on page 3)*

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Contact us:  
info@thebrasstacks.org  
P.O. Box 192  
New Prague, MN 56071  
www.thebrasstacks.org

# Gratitude and Giving Back



**Support your community and the environment!**

1 in 12 Minnesotans experience food insecurity, and at the same time, a third of the U.S. food supply is wasted. The Brass Tacks Initiative is proud to partner with the Peace Center Food Shelf to reduce food waste and address food insecurity in New Prague and nearby areas.

## Food Drive

New Prague, MN  
November 18-December 20, 2024

### Drop-off Locations:

- Cedar Press Coffee
- Giesenbrau Bier Co.
- First Bank and Trust
- Peace Center Food Shelf



For more information including drop-off hours and acceptable items, please visit our website [www.thebrasstacks.org/events](http://www.thebrasstacks.org/events) or email us at [info@thebrasstacks.org](mailto:info@thebrasstacks.org)



## JOIN US

The Brass Tacks Initiative is seeking volunteers for the following committees to help us continue our mission to support sustainable practices in the food stream through research, education, and collaboration.



### Marketing

Establishing, maintaining, and growing the visibility of the BTI. Helps promote our programs, products, and services.

### Development

Helps BTI achieve its mission by developing new resources and funding opportunities for the organization.

### Outreach/Education

Plans and implements educational events that inform and engage communities on sustainability in the food system.

For more information visit our website [www.thebrasstacks.org/volunteer](http://www.thebrasstacks.org/volunteer) or email [Rachel@thebrasstacks.org](mailto:Rachel@thebrasstacks.org)

## Eco-Friendly Festivities.

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However, they can be carefully saved and reused for future gifts, or consider using natural decorations like twine or dried flowers.

*What about leftover food like ham bones?*

Leftover food waste, including ham bones, can be composted to create nutrient-rich soil for gardens. Alternatively, check with your local waste management facility for specific food waste disposal guidelines.

*How do I recycle my tree after the holidays?*

Many cities offer special tree recycling programs, where trees are collected and chipped for mulch or compost. Some areas also have designated drop-off points for tree disposal.

*What about plastic holiday decorations?*

Plastic holiday decorations can often be recycled, but it's important to check for recycling symbols and consult local recycling guidelines. Consider donating unwanted decorations or repurposing them into craft projects.

*Can I recycle my old decorations?*

Consider upcycling old decorations into new items or donating them to thrift stores or community organizations. This reduces the need for new raw materials and extends the life of these items.



*Donating Christmas decor to local thrift stores is a great way to reduce waste during the holidays.*

## More tips for sustainable celebrations

Minimize waste by opting for e-cards, using reusable or biodegradable decorations, shopping with reusable bags, and supporting sustainable gift choices.

Embracing eco-friendly practices during the holiday season can significantly reduce our environmental impact. By being mindful of our choices and opting for recycling and reduction, we can make a collective difference. To learn more about how you can contribute to sustainable practices and reduce food waste, visit [www.thebrasstacks.org](http://www.thebrasstacks.org). For local recycling information, check with your city or county.

*This article contains information based on research and general recycling guidelines. For specific local recycling guidelines, please consult your local waste management or recycling center.*

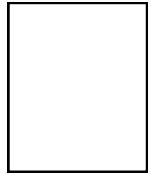
## Make a contribution and help us continue our mission!

This year, BTI has provided food waste education to hundreds of residents in Scott County. Help us keep the momentum going into 2025 by making a contribution today! Your contribution of any size helps us provide free and low-cost programs to families, small businesses, and other organizations.

Scan the code or visit [www.thebrasstacks.org](http://www.thebrasstacks.org) to learn more and to donate!

Scan Me





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## ***About BTI***

The Brass Tacks Initiative is a 501c3 nonprofit founded on a mission to support sustainability in the food stream through research, education, and collaboration.

Our name comes from the phrase "let's get down to brass tacks." The phrase means to address the most important facts of a project or problem. The fact is food waste is a problem with environmental, economic, and social impacts. We believe the only way to make an impact on food waste is to **research** best practices and new methods of recycling, **collaborate** with the companies who are generating waste to find alternatives to the landfill, and make sure that current and future leaders are equipped with the **education** needed to make sustainable impacts in their community.

*For more information about BTI visit our website [www.thebrasstacks.org](http://www.thebrasstacks.org) or contact us via email at [info@thebrasstacks.org](mailto:info@thebrasstacks.org).*