



# Sustainability and Recycling



Tis the season to be jolly... and eco-friendly! With twinkling lights, festive cheer, and a whole lot of waste, it's easy to get caught up in the holiday hustle. But let's make Helena more sustainable this season. Read on for simple tips to keep your celebrations bright while helping the environment.

## Deck the Halls with Bales of Cardboard!

As the holiday season kicks off, let's make a commitment to a greener holiday. A big part of that is recycling! We hope you're already recycling year-round, but the holidays can generate a ton of waste. From festive packaging to party leftovers, let's be mindful about what we can recycle and what's best for the landfill.

### Quick Recycling Tips:

**Cardboard Central:** All those corrugated Amazon boxes can be recycled at the City of Helena Transfer Station. Just break them down and remove any packing materials.

**Glass Act:** Glass bottles and jars from holiday parties and dinners can also be recycled at the Transfer Station. Please remember to remove the plastic stoppers and corks.

**Plastic Fantastic:** Plastic #1 and #2 containers from your holiday cooking and cleaning can be recycled too.

**Battery Blitz:** Don't forget those old batteries from electronics! Lithium batteries can start fires, so please bring them to the Transfer Station as well.

### Beyond the Transfer Station:

There are several other places around Helena where you can recycle:

- Safeway
- Grubstake
- Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds
- Boeing
- Across from Dale Harris Park
- Canyon Ferry Mini-Basket
- Laib-ation Station

These locations have more limited recycling options than the Transfer Station, but they're an easy place to take your cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, and paper.

### A Word on Wrapping Paper:

While it looks beautiful under the tree, wrapping paper, unfortunately, isn't recyclable in Helena. Mixing it with other recyclables can contaminate the whole load and send it straight to the landfill. So, let's keep it separate and find other creative ways to wrap our gifts!

**The Transfer Station will be closed and there will be no trash collection on Christmas and New Years Day.**



## Sustainable Gift Wrapping: Ideas for an Eco-Friendly Holiday



**Furoshiki:** This traditional Japanese wrapping technique involves using beautiful fabric to wrap gifts. It's reusable, stylish, and eco-friendly.



**Newspaper or Magazine Paper:** A creative and sustainable way to wrap gifts. You can decorate it with ribbons, stickers, or hand-drawn designs.



**Brown Paper:** A simple and classic option that can be personalized with stamps, markers, or natural materials like pinecones and berries.



**Reusable Gift Bags:** Invest in high-quality reusable gift bags that can be used year after year. Decorate them with ribbons, tags, or paint.



**DIY Gift Wrap:** Use materials you have on hand, such as old maps, sheet music, or fabric scraps. Get creative and personalize your gifts with unique wrapping.

## Boy Scouts Troop 214: Turning Christmas Trees into Fish Habitat

In a great example of community and environmental stewardship, Boy Scouts Troop 214 continues to work to help residents transform discarded Christmas trees into valuable fish habitat at Canyon Ferry Lake.

The troop's Christmas tree pickup program began in December 2020 as a fundraiser to replace around \$5000 in stolen camping gear. They were looking for a way to provide a service for the money they were fundraising. The pandemic-friendly initiative not only provided a convenient service for residents but also helped Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Pines for Perch program.

Since 2020, the Scouts collect around 300-400 trees from the Helena, Helena Valley, and East Helena areas. With the generous support of

Helena Sand and Gravel, the trees are transported to Canyon Ferry Lake where the Scouts help prepare and place them in the water to create a thriving perch habitat.

This collaborative effort between the Boy Scouts, Helena Sand and Gravel, and Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks exemplifies the power of community partnerships in promoting environmental sustainability. By repurposing Christmas trees, the program reduces waste, conserves resources, and enhances the local ecosystem.

Support Scouting in your neighborhood and have your tree recycled! The Scouts suggest a donation of \$10 per tree for pickup but will gladly accept any donation over that amount. All the money raised from the Scouts' efforts goes directly to the troop. Your donation is used to help pay for camps, fund troop activities, and community service projects.



### To schedule a Christmas tree pickup:

#### Register online:

<http://troop214helena.square.site>

**Email:** [troop214helena@gmail.com](mailto:troop214helena@gmail.com).

Please place the tree curbside in front of your residence. If that is not possible, place the tree at the nearest cross street corner. Trees need to be out by 9:00 am on pickup day.

Pickup dates are Saturdays, December 28, January 4, and January 11, between 9 am and 3 pm.



### *City of Helena Holiday Tree Disposal*

Please note that the City of Helena will not be conducting curbside pickup of Christmas trees this year. However, residents can still easily dispose of their trees in a sustainable way. In addition to the Boy Scouts' tree pickup program, residents can bring their trees to the City of Helena Transfer Station.

## **Winter Energy Efficiency Tips**

Winter in Montana can be harsh, and heating accounts for a significant portion of energy consumption during the winter months. One look at your winter energy bills and you'll likely agree.

By implementing a few simple energy-saving tips, you can keep your home cozy, your energy bills low, and reduce your carbon footprint.

Here are some practical tips to help you save energy this winter:

**Seal Up the Leaks:** Air leaks can significantly impact your home's energy efficiency. Use weatherstripping and caulk to seal gaps around doors, windows, and outlets.

**Insulate, Insulate, Insulate:** Proper insulation is crucial for maintaining a comfortable indoor temperature. Consider adding insulation to your attic, walls, and basement.

**Lower Your Thermostat:** Even a small temperature reduction can make a big difference. Lower your thermostat a few degrees when you're sleeping or away from home.

**Utilize Natural Heat:** Open curtains during the day to let in sunlight and close them at night to retain heat.

**Maintain Your HVAC System:** Schedule regular maintenance for your heating and cooling system to ensure optimal performance.