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Georgia Southern University Faculty Expert Offers Tips on Eco-Friendly Holiday Celebrations

DECEMBER 14, 2010

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Georgia Southern University's Center for Sustainability is offering ideas on how to celebrate the holidays in an eco-friendly way.

Many common holiday practices increase the electricity usage and waste, but Sustainability Director Lissa Leege said a few new twists on these old ideas can make a big impact on the environment.

"During this season of joy and goodwill, a few simple ideas can help reduce the unintended negative impacts of the holidays on the environment and turn them into new traditions and potential savings," she said.

Tips for a "Green" Holiday Season

1) Try LED Christmas lights on your tree/house this year. They use only 10-20 percent of the energy required to power traditional lights, which saves consumers 80-90 percent on their electric bill.

2) Avoid purchasing new wrapping paper this year. Instead, use reusable bags or wrap presents in your children's art, the Sunday comics, or colorful cloth tied up in a bow.

3) After the holiday excitement subsides, remember to recycle your wrapping paper right along with your newspapers. You can even recycle your Christmas tree. Leave it at the curb with your yard waste, chip it into mulch for your own yard or bring it to Keep Bulloch Beautiful's "Bring One For The Chipper" event.

4) To help you with your shopping, download an eco application on your smart phone. You can learn what products and companies are "green," which stores have the best environmental records and products, and where the closest eco-friendly stores are located.

<http://planetgreen.discovery.com/feature/green-phone/green-apps-mobile-phones.html>

5) Remember to unplug your chargers (phone, camera, battery, etc.). They continue to draw energy even when no longer charging. Get a power strip for your computer and peripherals so you can turn them OFF instead of keeping them on standby, drawing "vampire" energy.

6) Shop for locally made products and locally grown foods as much as possible to avoid transportation costs and emission of vehicle pollution. Support your local economy!