

Green Gift Giving Ideas from Fairlawn Green Action

Interested in giving a gift that shows your recipient you care for them & their future, and that benefits us all? Instead of giving "stuff" that is over-packaged, takes lots of energy to produce & transport, and is perhaps not wanted, give a responsible "green" gift...

- A night out to a "green" event, or rent the movie "An Inconvenient Truth"
- A gift of "Bullfrog Power" ~ use renewable energy to displace coal-fired electricity; e.g., www.bullfrogpower.com/
- Compact fluorescent lightbulbs
- Wind-up flashlight or radio (no batteries necessary!)
- Handmade soap
- Non-toxic cleaning products
- Cotton reusable shopping bags to replace the store's plastic bags (millions of tonnes of plastic packaging are thrown away over Christmas)
- Seed packets to grow your own vegetables next spring
- Solar powered outdoor lights
- Composter
- Water filter (avoid buying bottled water)
- Solar charger for small recharge-able appliances
- A book or magazine subscription focusing on a "green" topic
- Fair trade gifts <http://transfair.ca/en/products/products-canada>
- A bicycle and helmet
- Homemade cookies, chutney, jam, scarf
- A bottle of organically grown Canadian wine in a tetra pack (rather than a glass bottle which is heavier and fewer fit in a truck)
- A poem that you treasure, or one you wrote yourself
- A gift of yourself, not just "stuff" - a coupon book for future services (such as baby-sitting or an "enchanted evening"); something baked, sewn, handmade, composed, etc.
- Homemade craft or Christmas tree ornament
- A gift certificate for services e.g., energy audit, www.greensaver.org/
- Advice, help or financing home insulation & caulking, or composting & recycling
- Crafts and clothing from developing countries at alternative gift markets, not from commercial importers, so that the artisans receive a fair price for their work
- Shares in a green energy company like Windshare - www.windshare.ca
- A membership or donation in your loved one's name to an organization that's fighting global warming e.g. www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Donate/
- Energy saving appliances – look for "Energy Star"
www.oee.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/infosource/pub/appliances/2007/?text=N&printview=N



For more information, see www.planetfriendly.net/gifts.html#gifts for ideas on: *A Christmas That Doesn't Kill, Green Places To Shop, Green Healthy & Ethical Gift Ideas, Books & Videos, Magazine Subscriptions, More Ideas, Activities & Alternatives, Top Five Gifts Not to Buy, Seven Steps to a Healthier World*

source:

Fairlawn Green Action www.fairlawnavenueunited.ca/green

Fairlawn Avenue United Church

Have yourself a merry little GREEN Christmas.
Consume less “stuff”. Use less energy. Reduce GHG

Alternatives for gift giving

- Change to a “secret Santa” process where everyone buys for only one person
- Do a party craft where everyone makes a card or gift for one other person (instead of bringing purchased gifts)
- Give to a charity, or sponsor a child, in the name of a loved one, e.g.,
 - World Vision www.worldvision.ca,
 - Stephen Lewis Foundation www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/,
 - Bricks for CRC (Christian Resource Centre) www.fairlawnavenueunited.ca/bricks_for_crc.htm ,
 - The Stop Community Food Centre www.thestop.org/
- Undertake a family service project, such as working together at a soup kitchen.
- Give gifts that are “new-to-you”, used, recycled and handed-down, e.g., from your home, from flea markets or found online

Alternatives for Christmas cards

- Send emails this year! Don’t consider it crass -- think of all the trees and energy you are saving!
- Cut the fronts off last year’s Christmas cards and write your own message on the blank back.
- Reuse envelopes (instead of recycling them) by slitting them open at the side, then paste a white label over the old name/address and readdress them.
- If you send cards, purchase them from a charity.

Alternatives for gift wrap

- Reusable Christmas decorator bags
- Reusable cloth bags made from Christmas fabric or other decorative fabric
- Tea towels
- Remnants from wallpaper
- Reusable cardboard boxes (e.g., shoeboxes) with only the lid wrapped in Christmas fabric or paper to open easily and use again – tie with reusable ribbon or craft supply such as gimp for closure.

Alternatives for bows

- Gimp and pipe cleaners – durable, reusable, and can be used as a craft item
- Biodegradable natural ribbons (lovely to reuse as hair ribbons or for next year’s wrappings)
- Skip the bows and ribbons entirely!

Alternative for Christmas present name tags

- Cut up last year’s Christmas cards, keeping the part with the picture or printed holiday message
- Make the present more exciting by writing an obtuse or witty clue on the card

Food choice alternatives

- Buy food and produce grown locally – this reduces the transportation costs and energy costs
- Buy loose rather than pre-packaged vegetables and fruits
- Start up a cookie exchange with friends to reduce your stress and allow time for charity work
- Don’t use disposable plates and plastic cutlery that create more garbage
- Rent wine glasses from a party store (Bonus: you return them dirty!) don’t buy plastic disposable

Energy saving Christmas alternatives

- Switch to LED Christmas lights – they use a tiny fraction of the energy of regular lights.
- Skip buying too many outdoor lights and give the money to a charity

Save Energy ~ Save Money ~ Save the Planet

source: Fairlawn Green Action

www.fairlawnavenueunited.ca/green

Fairlawn Avenue United Church

