



Since holiday celebrations and the New Year are rapidly approaching, most of us make an effort to keep a New Year's resolution or two. Whether we try to save money, lose weight, or quit certain habits, one habit worth breaking is throwing away items that can be reused or recycled.

Every year, landfills take on more and more things we no longer want or need. In fact, in 2015, Texans added about 33.5 million tons of stuff to them. That's more than six-and-a-half pounds of trash per Texan per day! If recent trends continue, that number will have increased for 2016. And at this rate, we only have enough landfill space to last another 56 years.

[Take Care of Texas](#) offers these easy ways to reduce waste – even before the new year starts:

- Use—and reuse—gift bags, since most gift wrap is difficult to recycle.
- Serve meals on reusable plates with cloth napkins, and compost the appropriate food scraps.
- Buy only the products you need, and use up the products you buy before throwing them out. Buy products made from or packaged in recycled materials.
- Consider purchasing refurbished electronics. The average household has approximately 28 electronic devices. Old electronics can be sold or donated, or recycled.
- Rechargeable batteries are everywhere. Most can be recharged up to 1,000 times, but when they no longer hold a charge, recycle them instead of tossing them in the trash where they can pose a threat to groundwater.
- People receive more than 80 billion pieces of junk mail each year and most of it ends up in landfills. Opt out of unwanted catalogs, prescreened credit and insurance offers. And remember to recycle that junk mail you still receive. Consider reusing holiday cards in craft projects instead of tossing them in the trash.

For your convenience, we've created an [infographic \(PDF\)](#) with the tips listed above. Download the [infographic \(jpg\)](#) to share by e-mail or on social media. Ask your friends and followers to do their part this holiday season to Take Care of Texas.



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