

# Christmas Tree Recycling

If you have chosen a real tree for your Christmas decorations please recycle it when the festive celebrations are over. Christmas trees can be recycled into wood chippings and mulches. Mulch and chippings can be used for gardens and provide excellent “environmentally friendly” animal bedding. If your tree is quite small and can fit into your green wheelie bin you can recycle it this way. Many garden centres provide recycling services after the festive season for Christmas trees; when buying your Christmas tree, always ask if they will recycle it for you after Christmas time. Your local authority will also be running recycling schemes for Christmas trees, you can find out about these from contacting your local county council. Before you take your tree to be recycled, make sure all of the decorations and stands are removed from the tree; these can not be recycled. An incredible 9,000 tonnes of extra rubbish is created every year from Christmas trees, that's almost five times the weight of the London Eye. There are better alternatives for your Christmas tree next year which are more environmentally friendly. You could buy a live tree (with roots) and plant it in your garden when the festive season is over. Another option is to buy a fake tree and re-use it the following years. Remember, you can not send an artificial tree to a Christmas tree recycling site!

If you find it difficult to find a recycling site, try contacting your local county council for current schemes and sites to take your tree.



The photograph above shows trees about to be recycled; they are going into a machine which chops the trees up. Once they are chopped up they go for mulch or chippings.

Facts about recycling at Christmas time:

- One billion Christmas cards ended up in waste bins in the UK this year. One tree is needed to make three thousand cards.
- We used 500 million more aluminium can drinks over Christmas.
- Over 3 thousand tonnes of aluminium foil was used to wrap food in.
- An extra 750 million glass bottles and jars were used over Christmas and New Year.
- We use approximately 83km<sup>2</sup> of wrapping paper.
- 8 billion Christmas trees were used last year and most of them were thrown away.
- The amount of plastic that was thrown away in the UK last year was equivalent to 50,000 polar bears.

**Links:**

<http://www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/InformationSheets/ChristmasRecycling.htm>

Useful information on Christmas waste and recycling.

<http://www.nfumutual.co.uk/lifestyle/recycling-christmas-trees.htm>

Lists the options available for recycling your Christmas trees.