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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

'Tis the season to recycle

12 Do's and Don'ts when recycling for a greener holiday season

PORT ST. LUCIE - Trash cans routinely overflow during the holiday season with boxes, catalogs, and newspapers stuffed with advertisements. The City of Port St. Lucie is challenging residents to recycle and help divert tons of valuable recycling items away from the landfill. On average, the City generates more than 25 percent more trash than normal between Thanksgiving and the New Year. Much of the extra waste generated during the holiday season is easily recycled. This includes cardboard boxes, gift boxes, wrapping paper, cards, junk mail, magazines, and catalogs.

From presents to parties, there is a wealth of materials that can be recycled. Residents can help make the process more efficient by ensuring that they are putting the correct items into the correct bins. While most items may be reusable materials, some items are not accepted. Here are 12 tips to recycle properly:

#### **Gift wrapping materials**

- Do's - Residents can recycle paper gift wrapping, tissue paper, and greeting cards.
- Don'ts - Bows, glitter, ribbons, cellophane and foil gift wrapping is not recyclable, especially those items with wire mesh.

#### **Product packaging**

- Do's - Gift boxes, wrapping paper, and paper packaging can be recycled with their regular paper and cardboard recycling. Residents need to remove tape, ribbons and other decorations prior to tossing the items into their recycling container.
- Don'ts - Puffy (air pillow) mailing envelopes, Styrofoam, and bubble wrap is household waste.

#### **Decorations**

- Do's - Pack up holiday decorations for reuse next year.
- Don'ts - Ornaments, garland, tinsel or strings of lights are considered household waste. Plastic ornaments covered with glitter would negatively impact the recycling process as well. Damaged light bulbs are also not recyclable.

#### **Christmas trees**

- Do's - Recycle your Christmas tree and place it curbside with your yard waste. Make sure the tree is completely cleared of lights, tinsel, ornaments, and tree stands.
- Don'ts - Plastic bags are not recyclable. Don't put your Christmas tree in a plastic bag. By putting your tree in a plastic bag, you are creating one extra step in the process of recycling. The tree gets mulched rather than disposed of at the landfill.

#### **Going Green**

- Do's - Empty and scrape out the food or materials from all bottles, jars, containers, and cans before putting it in the recycling bin. If it's not possible to remove all the food debris such as peanut butter, it's better to throw it away in the trash rather than contaminating the recycling stream.

- Don'ts - Loose plastic grocery or department store bags, or plastic film gets jammed in the recycle processing equipment and requires a different collection system. Most grocery chains provide collection bins for these plastic bags and wraps.

### **Holiday Cooking**

- Do's - Foil baking cookware, pie plates, and cookie sheets can be recycled. Please rinse off small bits of food, like cookie crumbs and fruit or vegetable juice before putting it in the bin.
- Don'ts - Wax paper, butcher paper, milk, and eggnog cartons, and biscuit dough tubes are not recyclable due to a waxy coating on the paperboard.

The City's robust recycling program generates revenue for the Neighborhood Improvement and Community Engagement (NICE) program for neighborhood improvements.