

GREAT FINDS

Peacock-embellished fashions, accessories and home-decor items are taking flight this season. In shades of vibrant blue and green, here are a few favorites: This Tiffany peacock feather table lamp is made of handcrafted copperfoil. \$848.95 at www.homestylehut.com.

— Gannett



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HOMES & LIVING

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REAL ESTATE
LISTINGS INSIDE

A trick or treat for the environment?

It has been rumored that Halloween comes second only to Christmas in holiday consumerism.

Although this is not actually true (it's no higher than sixth, after Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Easter and Father's Day), Halloween is one of the more visible holiday celebrations, from the decked-out houses and yards to the parades of costumed revelers. National Retail Federation estimates that nearly two-thirds of Americans spend an average of \$60 each to celebrate the holiday each year (with about one-



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Recycling

third of that going toward candy purchases).

Halloween can have frightening impacts on the waste stream, taking into account candy wrappers, discarded costumes and decorations, and, of course, pumpkins.

But there are some very easy tricks to help treat the environment right.

► **Costumes:** The most creative costumes come from your imagination and the thrift store. Shop secondhand first for your costumes, and donate or trade your costumes for next year.

► **Decorations:** Thrift stores are great resources for decorations, too. Besides the manufactured decor, you can make things like scarecrows from secondhand clothing and your own yard waste (leaves and twigs raked from your yard). Avoid buying

disposable decorations. Instead, buy durable items you can use year after year.

► **Pumpkins:** Everyone loves a jack-o'-lantern, but they add a lot of extra waste to the landfill. If you know someone who has a compost bin, give him or her your pumpkin after the holiday, or take this opportunity to start your own backyard composting system.

► **Compost:** Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority now offers low-cost composting bins, and a how-to guide to help you get started. If you have a yard, you'll undoubtedly have a lot of yard

waste during this transitional season as trees shed their leaves and annuals and perennials transition for the fall. Nature provides all the ingredients to compost, and if you start now, you'll have a terrific supply of rich, organic soil amendment just in time for the spring planting season.

► *Alan Styles is recycling coordinator for the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority. His column appears the third Saturday of the month in Central Coast Living. Contact him at alanst@svswa.org.*