

## EarthTalk™

### From the Editors of E/The Environmental Magazine

**Dear EarthTalk:** Can you recommend some sources for toys and other holiday gifts that are both safe and not harmful to the environment?

— Tracy Gately,  
Marblehead, MA

Given the massive recall of toys contaminated with lead last year, let alone all the other bad news about chemicals seeping out of just about every other conceivable type of consumer item, it's no wonder that people are nervous about what might be inside the wrapping paper this next holiday season.

Luckily, growing environmental concerns—and consumer demand—means that plenty of safe and green-friendly items are available for those willing to do a little more than just walk around the closest shopping mall.

For kids' items, Oompa Toys (oompa.com) is hard to beat. The Wisconsin-based company offers thousands of child- and Earth-safe items. On Oompa's easy-to-use website you can buy products ranging from toys, dollhouses and stuffed animals to learning games, musical instruments and art supplies to kitchen play accessories, kids' furniture and tricycles, many items made with organic or recycled materials.

Another interesting online source for kids' toys is Washington-based Earthentree (earthentree.com), which sells dozens of pull toys, rattles, stackers and other goodies to stimulate young hands and minds.

All of their products are handcrafted by "fair trade" (fairly compensated) artisans in India using sustainably harvested wood and natural vegetable-based dyes. And Hazelnut Kids (hazelnutkids.com) specializes in natural, earth-friendly wooden and organic cotton toys for kids and babies, and even offers gift-wrapping with recycled and recyclable paper.

For grown-up gifts, EcoArtware (eco-artware.com) sells a variety of items made from recycled and natural materials, from bath and kitchen accessories to pet products to jewelry, including many hand-made items.

Everybodygreen (everybodygreen.com) is another good source for green-friendly jewelry. The company's No Plastic charm bracelets are made with corn starch-based resin, natural herbal tea dye and recycled brass.

For those holiday parties you might be attending, wine aficionados might appreciate a bottle of Boisset Family Estates' Yellow Jersey pinot noir (yellowjerseywine.com), which comes from France in a 100 percent recycled (and recyclable) plastic bottle.

Looking for fair trade arts and crafts? Gifts with Humanity (giftswithhumanity.com) sells clothing, home décor, jewelry and more from artists in Asia, Africa and Central and South America. Organic Bug (organicbug.com) also sells fair trade items and other natural and organic products from clothing to home décor items to travel accessories.

Other websites worth visiting for fair trade and/or green-friendly gifts



A child's snail pull-toy from Earthentree, is made from child-safe and eco-friendly materials. (Photo courtesy Earthentree)

include peacefulvalleygreetings.com, greenfeet.com, pristineplanet.com, nokiagreenstore.com, gaia.com, acacia.com and vivaterra.com. A simple Google search for "green holiday gifts" will turn up many more.

Another approach to the holidays, of course, for the sake of lessening one's footprint and tightening the belt in a downturned economy, is to eschew traditional gift-giving in favor of donating to a local or national environmental group in the name of a friend or loved one.

This can be accomplished by visiting the websites of your favorite green groups and making your way to their "Donate" page, or by visiting justgive.org or worldofgood.com (by eBay), both which facilitate contributions to worthwhile charities.

*Editor's Note: Be sure to try shopping first at Southwest Portland neighborhood business districts like Barbur Boulevard, Corbett Avenue, Garden Home, Hillsdale, Multnomah Village, Macadam Avenue, Raleigh Hills and South Burlingame. Did I miss anybody? You're more likely to find eco-friendly and fair-trade gifts locally and help your community at the same time.*

— Don Snedecor

**GOT AN ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTION?** Send it to: **EarthTalk**, c/o **E/The Environmental Magazine**, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; submit it at: [www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek/](http://www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek/), or e-mail: [earthtalk@emagazine.com](mailto:earthtalk@emagazine.com). Read past columns at: [www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php](http://www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php).

## OHSU FAMILY MEDICINE at Gabriel Park

*We Specialize in You and  
Your Family*

- General medicine
- Pediatric care
- Lab
- Obstetrics and gynecology
- Family planning
- Office surgery
- Sports medicine
- Travel medicine
- X-ray
- Bone-density screening
- Orthopedics
- Acupuncture
- New on-site pharmacy



Conveniently located across from the Southwest Community Center.  
Free Parking! To schedule an appointment, please call (503) 494-9992.

{Hours} Monday through Thursday: 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Oregon Health & Science University  
Gabriel Park Clinic  
4411 SW Vermont Street  
Portland, OR 97219

Email: [fmgp@ohsu.edu](mailto:fmgp@ohsu.edu)



OREGON  
HEALTH & SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY

## My PDC Story:

"PDC gave us so much information during our homebuying process. They worked with us on our payment and even got us closing assistance. Everything went so smoothly – an amazing experience."

Thank you PDC."

Charode and Jenae Johnson,  
Homeowners



The Johnson Family is home for the holidays.

To learn more about PDC's home loan and home buyer assistance programs, contact PDC at 503-823-3400 or [www.pdc.us](http://www.pdc.us).