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Fewer homes partake in grinding of greens

Angela Mapes Turner | The Journal Gazette

FORT WAYNE – In recent years, fewer people have been recycling Christmas trees.

Stacie Hubbert, program manager for Allen County Solid Waste Management, hopes that's a sign of the economic times and of more people buying artificial trees – not fewer people recycling.

Allen County Solid Waste Management is encouraging county residents to drop off their real trees between now and Jan. 14.

Community Corrections visits the sites and makes sure the trees are free of ornaments, tinsel and other leftover trimmings. Hubbert said it helps if people who bring their trees in plastic bags take those bags with them when they go.

All those things – as well as wire-containing wreaths – can damage the chipping machines that turn this season's trees to next season's mulch.

"For the most part, people are more or less trained," Hubbert said.

The chippers throw the recycled trees into 40-yard roll-off containers, which are then hauled away.

Last year, Allen County tree-recyclers filled nine containers, about half what had been the usual total, she said.

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Tree drop-off sites

Trees will not be picked up with regular trash, and all ornaments, tinsel and plastic bags must be removed. Wreaths will not be accepted. Trees will not be collected curbside within Fort Wayne.

Fort Wayne area

Allen County Highway Garage: 2234 Carroll Road

Foster Park West: Soccer field parking lot on the west side

Foellinger Theatre: Southwest corner of the back parking lot

Shoaff Park: Conklin Pavilion

McMillen Park: Pool parking lot

Monroeville area

Community Park: Parking lot, north end

New Haven area

Meadowbrook School parking lot

City Hall: 815 Lincoln Highway E., north side of the building

Woodburn area

Front Street: Under the water tower

Leo-Cedarville area

Across from Riverside Gardens Park: Corner of Grabill and Schwartz roads

For more information, call 449-7878 or go to www.acwastewatcher.org