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Contact:

Melissa Perez

Manager of Communications

mdummar@wm.com

(619) 933-0102

Go GREEN Instead of Red This Valentine's Day *Waste Management Urges Consumers to Give Sustainable Gifts Rather Than Traditional Items That End Up in the Trash*

Orange County, CA– While Valentine's Day is often associated with gifts of fresh roses, balloons, cards and boxes of candy, Waste Management of Orange County urges local customers to think "green" by considering more durable and sustainable alternatives for their Feb. 14 gift-giving.

"The idea of the holiday is to share your sentiments with those you care about – often times people don't realize that the gifts they give create additional waste for the landfill," said David Ross, Sr. District Manager for Waste Management of Orange County. "There are a number of gestures you can make to celebrate the holiday without generating additional waste ... it truly is easy to think green."

Here are some "green" alternatives to traditional Valentine's Day gifts:

Instead of...

...Give

Fresh Cut Flowers

Potted plants, flowers or trees that can be transplanted into a garden
(If you do give fresh cut flowers, be sure to place them in your green waste container for recycling once they are ready to be disposed)

Balloon Bouquets

More durable, long-lasting items that will remind your Valentine every day that you care, such as a framed photo, piece of artwork or a once in a unique experience like a hot-air balloon ride

Valentine's Cards

E-mail greetings or a photo with your message written on the back

Boxes of Candy

Sweets with less packaging, homemade treats, a dessert out at a restaurant or a gift card to your Valentine for their favorite restaurant

Perfume/Lotions

A "day of beauty," massage, manicure or facial at a local spa
(If you do give perfume or lotions, check to see if the packaging can be recycled or reused once empty)

"On any gift-giving occasion we always encourage giving gifts that aren't disposable – whether it's a durable, re-usable gift, a gift card or an activity," Ross said. "By thinking creatively you can come up with the perfect gift for your sweetheart and also for the environment."

Waste Management is the leading provider of comprehensive waste and environmental services in North America. For more information about how we think green, log onto www.wmorangecounty.com

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From Everyday Collection to Environmental Protection, Think Green, Think Waste Management