

Most overlooked holiday tasks highlighted

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

With all the holiday hubbub swirling, most of us forget to do at least one mission-critical task.

Have you remembered to buy wrapping paper? How about the right batteries for all those holiday gifts and gadgets? Missing anybody from your list, even if you checked it twice?

Here are some of the most often overlooked holiday tasks:

—Cards, wrapping paper and tape: You've purchased the perfect present for everybody on your list. You get everything home and the night before that big family party you realize the only wrapping paper in the house is emblazoned with "Happy Birthday!" Or worse, you've forgotten a card for grandma. Make sure to stock up on cards, wrapping paper, tape, ribbons and bows. In fact, even if you think you did, double-check the closet.

—Batteries, batteries, batteries: There's nothing worse than giving the perfect electronic gift, only to discover the batteries are missing or someone purchased the wrong ones. Some batteries, such as the typical carbon zinc AA batteries found on most drug store shelves, won't be able to fully power that digital camera or quickly will run out of juice for that MP3 player.

For those high-to mid-drain gadgets—like digital cameras, HDTV remotes and MP3 players used frequently—try high performance alkalines, which provide longer run times than standard alkalines in most applications. Put simply: one can squeeze up to 60 additional photos from a digital camera powered by these batteries compared to standard alkaline models. If it's got enough juice for them, it's got enough for anyone's many uses!

—Emergency gifts: The doorbell rings and the neighbor is standing there, gift in hand. Happy Holidays! But you've forgotten to get them something. How about the mailman, baby-sitter, the kids' teachers or even the boss? Smart planners keep an emergency gift shelf stocked with small gifts already wrapped, to ensure delightful moments don't turn into frightful ones.

—Charitable donations: It's far too easy to forget those less fortunate, especially during this

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hectic season. This year, make sure to select a worthy cause and complete the donation before the holiday hits. Especially when giving to local community organizations, it's helpful to get donations in early so they can make purchases in a timely fashion and brighten up the holidays for others.

—All the trimmings: The pots are bubbling, sauces simmering and cookies baking. And then you realize you've forgotten the gravy. Or the marshmallows for the hot chocolate or the sweet potatoes. It's easy to overlook the trimmings and those little things that make the special holiday feasts special. This year, prepare the holiday grocery list and then have a spouse or an older child inspect it carefully. Do this before hitting the supermarket together!

This season be sure to plan properly and then be the best prepared holiday reveler on the block. And don't forget the stocking stuffers!