

[Wait, don't trash those Mardi Gras beads](#)

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Mardi Gras beads are fun to catch, but what do you do when there are bags full of them in your possession? Check out these ways to reuse and recycle your beads. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The Carnival season has passed, and all the leftover king cakes have gone stale. As for the pile of beads abandoned in a corner of your home, Liz Pfafflin, assistant director in the Office of Sustainability at Tulane University, offers this advice — recycle or reuse.

ARC of Greater New Orleans will take the beads off your hands, Pfafflin said. ARC, a nonprofit organization that employs people with intellectual disabilities, will sort and organize them for next year's Carnival season. ARC provides drop-off locations throughout the city, including Whole Foods on Magazine Street near the uptown

campus and all New Orleans Public Library locations.

“Mardi Gras is essential to community culture in New Orleans, and ARC’s bead-recycling program has created a way to tie our bead waste management back into that culture,” said Pfafflin.

Also, if you prefer a tasty reward for your good deed to the environment, [Krispy Kreme](#) doughnuts on Clearview Parkway in Metairie will trade you a dozen doughnuts for 12 pounds of beads.

Another option is to get crafty. Embellish clothing with beads by using a bit of fabric glue. Decorate dorm rooms or home exteriors. Use hot glue and a canvas to make wall art or create a seasonal door wreath.

If all else fails, Pfafflin said that students should look for purple “bead bins” in campus residence halls during move-out week. Beads left in the bins will be donated to the ARC of Greater New Orleans.

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“ARC’s program employs community members while also promoting sustainable methods for reusing beads and reducing our environmental impact.”

— Liz Pfafflin, assistant director in the Office of Sustainability