



GUIDE series

Waste Reduction for Events and Festivals

Tips and Resources

Festivals and events generate considerable of waste. This is not only costly, but also negatively impacts the environment. This guide offers ways to minimize waste generated during an event or festival, and while each event is unique, many of the suggestions can be adapted to events large or small. Advance planning is key in making waste-reduction efforts successful, and taking steps to limit waste in the first place will go a long way towards reducing litter, cost and the negative impacts that waste has on the natural world.

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1. Plan ahead!

Larger events require considerable lead time to effectively reduce waste.

2. Think Zero-Waste...

or darn near.

3. Choose a venue

that offers a comprehensive recycling program to simplify some of the planning.

4. Incorporate a manned recycling station

to serve as the site for all materials to be collected. Large events may require several of these stations to accommodate attendees.



5. Check with your local waste hauler

to see if they provide a multiple material recycling service for festivals or events. Several companies provide small totes to collect paper/cardboard, beverage containers, organic waste, general waste, wash stations and portable toilets

6. Partner with a local charity

for the collection of refundable beverage containers OR donate the proceeds to a local environmental group.

7. Tape shut or cordon off

existing garbage receptacles and have signs explaining where the recycling station(s) are located.

Zero-Waste

A philosophy that attempts to mimic nature, eliminating waste altogether. It means designing products, packaging and programs with reuse, composting and/or recycling in mind.

Recycling station bin collection ideas:

- Beverage Containers
- Glass
- Organic material
- Plastics
- Paper/Cardboard

8. Ensure that recycling bins are well marked

to make it easy for people to understand what goes where. Pictures often help (see sample signage at end of this document)!

9. Remember

that people will bring food wares and packaging from outside the event, so provide flexibility for these items.

10. Designate a green team

that is visible and that can monitor the recycling station(s) and provide clarity to people with questions.

11. If using a caterer,

choose one that uses reusable food wares.

12. If organizing your own event,

seek out companies that supply dinnerware, glassware, flatware and/or linens.

*The Yellow Pages (under **Party Supply - Rental**) has a large number of companies that rent durable food wares for various events.*

13. For larger events with food vendors,

make reusable, recyclable or compostable* food wares (cups, plates, bowls, cutlery, etc.) mandatory. Include this in the permitting process for all vendors serving food or drink.

To discourage theft, the Calgary Folk Music Festival has put a \$2 deposit on all reusable plates, which is refunded when the plate is returned to the dish collection area.

•If compostable food wares are chosen, ensure that the municipality has a composting facility that can accept this material. If no such facility exists, reusable or recyclable food wares should be chosen.

14. Encourage festival goers

to bring a reusable coffee/tea mug to reduce the need for disposable cups.

Small changes make a big difference, especially for daily drinkers. Individually, one cup of coffee purchased every day in a disposable container contributes about 210.5 kilograms of waste per year.

Source: Ideal Bite

15. Avoid disposable plastic water bottles.

Although plastic water bottles are recyclable, the bottling, packaging and shipping of billions of litres of bottled water leaves a large environmental burden world-wide. Instead, opt to provide water in jugs or try

using a water cooler. Encourage attendees to bring a refillable bottle to further cut down on waste.

Bottled water costs 240 to 10,000 times more than tap water and recent studies show that most bottled water is just tap water run through a filter. In Calgary, 1000 litres of tap water costs less than \$1, whereas a litre of Evian will cost nearly \$2.

(Blumenfeld, J. and Leal, S. *"The real cost of bottled water"* San Francisco Chronicle. February 18, 2007)

16. Put signage in bathroom stalls

to inform people about the green initiatives at the festival/event.

Encourage festival/event goers to use alternative transportation, including walking, public transit, cycling and carpooling.

17. Make attempts to reduce the amount of paper

used when advertising, printing brochures, pamphlets, schedules, program highlights or tickets. If some printing is necessary, try to use 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

Most printers offer a wide range of recycled paper products including poster board and cardstock. Most common are 30% post-consumer recycled paper products but many printers now offer 100% post-consumer recycled options.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Calgary Area Bottle Depots:

Beddington Heights Bottle Depot
20 Country Hills Landing NW

Bowness Bottle Depot
4708 - 16 Avenue NW

Calgary Bottle Exchange
9218 Horton Road SW

Chinook Bottle Depot
Rear, Bay 15, 6225 Centre Street SW

Moneyback Container Shack
12, 2835 - 37 Street SW

Monterey Bottle Depot
2240 - 68 Street NE

North East Bottle Depot Ltd
5497 Falsbridge Drive NE

North Hill Container Depot Ltd.
3915 - 3A Street NE

Crowfoot Bottle Depot Ltd.
No. 30, 141 Crowfoot Way NW

Spy Hill Bottle Depot
Bay 7, 7715 - 112 Avenue NW

Deerfoot Bottle Depot
11440 - 29 Street SE

Sunridge Bottle Depot
3261 - 34 Avenue NE

Downtown Bottle Depot
8499 Horton Road SW

Trail Bottle Exchange
1018 - 9 Avenue SE

Fish Creek Bottle Depot Ltd.
Bay 108, 3700 Anderson Road SW

Tsuu T'ina Bottle Depot
15216 Shaw Road SE

Forest Lawn Bottle Depot
2228 - 52 Street SE

Uptown Bottle Depot
629 - 10 Avenue SW

Happy Can Bottle Depot
3304 - 33 Street NW

V.R.R.I. Bottle Depot
#12, 700 - 33 Street NE

Marklan Bottle Depot
2842 Glenmore Trail SE

EVENT GREENING

[A Greener Festival](#) - a comprehensive guide for organizers and festival-goers alike

[Grist](#) - Music Festivals Aim to Lessen Footprint

[David Suzuki's Making Your Event More Sustainable](#)

[Environment Canada Green Meeting Guide \(PDF\)](#)

[Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Report](#)

[Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Conventions \(CERC\)](#)

[The CERC Green Event Planning Guide](#)

[Green Meeting Industry Council](#)

[IUCN Responsible Tourism Handbook](#)

GREEN CONVENTION CENTRE

[Calgary TELUS Convention Centre](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

[Fair Trade](#)

Festival Recycling Services:

Alberta Beverage Container Recycling Corporation (ABCRC): sells [beverage container recycling bins](#).

403-264-0170 extension 234

Green Calgary: sells the [beverage container recycling bins](#) produced by the ABCRC.

403-230-1443 extension 222

PEL Recycling: provides multiple materials recycling and organic-waste collection for festivals and events.

403-245-8181

403-369-3777

Waste Management Inc.: provides multiple materials recycling, wash basins and portable toilets for festivals and events.

403-720-7201

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES OF GREEN CALGARY

Empowering Calgarians to create healthy homes and communities by providing environmental education, products and services.

Green Calgary offers a variety of programs to help achieve mandates of waste reduction and water protection including:

Environmental Education

Green Calgary is pleased to offer a wide variety of presentations to businesses and employees to help answer tough questions about the environment, explain how to practically become green and share Calgary-specific knowledge. These can be done as part of a staff meeting, as a 'Lunch and Learn' or any other time.

Waste at Work: Reducing your company's environmental footprint

Green Procurement: Using buying power to influence change

Waste at Home: How individuals can make a difference in daily life

Getting There Green: Environmentally friendly driving and alternative transportation

Green Cleaning: How to improve indoor air quality and choose green products

Composting: Learn how to recycle your organic waste and make great fertilizer

Vermi-composting: Don't have a yard? Learn to compost indoors with red wiggler worms!

Please contact the Education team at [403] 230 1443 ext 225 or education@greencalgary.org for more information or to book. Member discounts apply.

Healthy Homes Calgary

The Healthy Homes Calgary program is our newest residential service, providing free home visits to Calgarians interested in creating a healthy living environment, while reducing the home's "eco-footprint". We will provide the tools and information needed to improve indoor air quality, energy and water efficiency, waste reduction, and more.

Please call Ashley at [403] 230 1443 ext. 223 or email ashley@greencalgary.org.

Commercial Environmental Services

Assisting companies to reduce their environmental impact associated with waste. We offer customized, one-on-one service and the information, education, resources and tools necessary to divert waste from landfill and help reach your waste-diversion goals.

Services include:

- Waste Reduction Solutions / Consultation
- Online Recycling Directory
- Waste Measurement Toolkit Assessments
- Calgary Materials Exchange - www.cmex.ca

Please call Sarah at [403] 230 1443 ext. 226 or email sarah@greencalgary.org.

EcoStore - selling environmental products that reduce our environmental footprint

The Green Calgary EcoStore sells products that are environmentally sustainable and help to reduce waste and conserve water. Products include compost bins, recycling bins, rain barrels, water saving kits and much, much more. Visit the website for details: www.greencalgary.org

We are wheelchair accessible and located in downtown Calgary on the southwest corner of 4th Avenue and 7th Street SW.

809 Fourth Avenue SW

[403] 230 1443 ext. 222

Open Tuesday and Wednesday 10-5:30

Thursday 10-7

Friday and Saturday 10-4

Closed Sunday and Monday

Information Services & E-newsletter

We respond to thousands of public requests for environmental information. Calgarians want to know how to recycle their household waste and otherwise reduce their environmental footprint.

Please contact Green Calgary if you would like more information about our programs or if you are interested in volunteering.

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