

# Greening Events Guide

**A quick guide to making your event more environmentally friendly**

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## Waste Reduction

Waste refers to anything that is being disposed of including items going in the garbage, recycling or greenbin. Waste creation takes place at an event but also in the months leading up, during planning meetings and while training volunteers. Create a strategy to generate less waste for all aspects of your event.

### *Create Less Waste*

Having a plan to create as little waste as possible will help your event shrink its environmental impact. If waste must be created, try to use items that are recyclable or compostable, so as little waste is sent to landfill as possible.

- Encourage vendors to have a “Pack it in, Pack it out” policy – they bring back anything they brought with so they create no garbage
- Use reusable dishes and cutlery as well as cloth napkins at your planning meetings and appreciation events as well as at your event, if possible
- Have a water refill station at your event so volunteers and attendees can refill their own water bottles
- Use reusable signage and materials whenever possible
- Borrow or rent materials you will only use once
- Use a projector at meetings or training sessions to share information instead of printing documents
- When printing documents, remember to print double sided
- Avoid printing pamphlets when signage or other means may work as well or better

### *Dealing with the Waste*

It is important to have a plan for how you will handle any waste created at your event. Work before your event to help prevent recyclable or compostable items from heading to landfill.

- Make waste sorting stations at your event with containers for Garbage, Recycling and Greenbin waste
  - Waste sorting stations monitored by volunteers are more effective at correctly sorting waste
  - Have volunteers at your waste sorting station to make sure the recycling and greenbins do not get contaminated with garbage which would cause them to have to go to landfill
- Have signage at your event to show where waste should be taken and how to sort it correctly
- Arrange your waste pickup with the City or other contractor to have the waste taken to the correct facility (Community Recycling Centre)
  - If it is a small event, have volunteers take the waste home and put it out on their garbage day
- Tally the containers of recycling, greenbin and garbage created at the event – figure out how much you were able to divert from landfill and share your success

#### **Waste Watchers sorting station with volunteers at Winona Peach Festival**



*The Waste Watchers Program provides waste sorting bins, signage and volunteers to manage the waste sorting area and helps an event send less waste to landfill.*

*To Find out more or request Waste Watchers attend your next event:  
[www.earthdayhamilton.ca](http://www.earthdayhamilton.ca)*

## Transportation

The impact of transportation emissions from your event does not just happen the day of the event, with people coming by bus, bike, foot or bike to your event. The transportation emissions also come from your planning meetings and other activities leading up to the event.

### *Planning Meetings and Training Sessions*

- Encourage carpooling, cycling, walking and public transit use
- Try to have the meetings in easily accessible areas with many transportation options available

### *Transportation to the Event*

- Plan to have a secure bike parking area at your event
  - Book the Open Streets Bike Valet program: [openstreetshamilton.ca/bikevalet](http://openstreetshamilton.ca/bikevalet)
- Create an incentive for people to come to your event by carpool, bike, foot or public transportation
  - For example:
    - Parking has a cost, but there is a free shuttle bus available as well as free bike parking
    - People that arrive by carpool, bus, bike or foot receive a ticket for a draw or discounted entry to your event
- Find and advertise alternative transportation routes to your event
- Provide carpooling or shuttles as a way for volunteers/event staff to arrive at event
- Record your successes with having attendees arrive by alternative transportation means
- Share the number of car rides avoided and approximate emissions saved
  - <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html>



## Food

Being thoughtful in the food choices you make available, both for the attendees and your staff or volunteers, can help you create a greener event.

- Encourage vendors to work with local providers to offer local, seasonal foods
- Serve organic foods when possible
- Make sure to provide healthy snacks, such as apples or carrots, at meetings as an alternative to the traditional donuts or muffins
- Arrange to have water refill stations at your event
- Encourage vendors to provide food with less packaging or packaging that is compostable or recyclable

## Energy

Most of us do not know generate our own electricity or know how our electricity is created. Conservation and energy reduction can help reduce our environmental impact as well as using energy from renewable sources when possible.

- Work with your venue to try and have your event powered by renewable energy
  - For example: An event can be powered by BullFrog Power
- Try to work with a venue that values energy conservation
  - For example: Using Compact Fluorescent Bulbs or LEDs for lighting
- Consider using renewable energy at your event
  - Bicycle powered entertainment stages are available or solar powered lighting
- Avoid the use of a generator whenever possible



## People (Attendees, Volunteers, Staff, etc.)

- Share your green policies with everyone at your event
  - Teaching your volunteers and staff about your policies (waste sorting, carpooling, etc.)
  - Advertise your green policies for attendees
- Provide digital copies instead of physical copies of documents with people when possible
- When thanking volunteers or staff try to avoid trinkets that may be just thrown away or recycled
- Share you Green Event successes with everyone involved – be proud you went green!
  - Sharing successes and strategies can show other events how easy it is to be green