

# Zero-Waste Program Guide

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## **PREAMBLE**

Special events can generate a lot of waste, which can be costly and negatively impact our environment. A zero-waste event aims to create no waste through maximizing recycling and composting. By following guidelines, events within residences can also achieve zero-waste status.

## **PROCEEDURE**

### **Promote Your Event**

- Environmental awareness can be a great angle through which to market an event. It can also help you communicate the message of sustainability in residence
- Take advantage of electronic advertising through social media, e-mails, and university websites
- Use water soluble chalk for sidewalk campaigns
- Notify participants prior to the event that it will be zero-waste and invite them to bring reusable items such as mugs, refillable water bottles and their own cutlery

### **Identify and Reduce Potential Waste**

A key step to a zero-waste event is to know where and what types of waste might be generated. Start by making a list of potential sources of waste and identify strategies to reduce them. Some examples:

### **Food and associated waste**

#### *Leftovers and food scraps*

- Most food scraps can be composted, so make sure to provide clearly marked organics collections stations and encourage participants to sort their waste (all sorted compostable waste can be passed on to Hospitality Services Staff in residence dining halls for proper disposal)
- Leftover food can be stored for immediate future use or distributed amongst guests and participants so as not to go to waste
- If purchasing food from outside sources, make sure to request that disposable items such as paper cups, plates, disposable utensils, and condiment packets are not included

### *Packaging*

- Consider purchasing food items and condiments in bulk to reduce packaging

### *Disposable napkins*

- Most napkins are compostable, therefore encourage participants to dispose of them in organics collection bins

### *Containers and cutlery*

- Try to provide reusable containers and cutlery if possible. This could also decrease the cost of the event. If disposable products are unavoidable, consider using compostable containers and cutlery

### *Plastic bottles*

- One of the most visible and environmentally damaging sources of waste is plastic bottles. Rehydration stations exist within residences and across campus and they offer chilled, filtered water so encourage participants to bring their own refillable bottles

## **Event materials**

### *Flyers, posters, wrist bands/tickets, agendas, etc.*

- Distributing event materials electronically can save printing costs, as well as decrease the amount of waste produced. If printing cannot be avoided, select the double-sided printing option and print on recycled paper
- Also encourage participants to recycle their printed materials whenever possible

### *Other materials*

- When clothing items are distributed at events (t-shirts, hats, etc.) consider where these items are purchased and whether they are manufactured using sustainable materials and processes. Purchase clothing made from recycled fibers, organic cotton or hemp, as well as products made in Canada
- Other materials can also include paint and decorations. Green choices include water-soluble and nontoxic paint, biodegradable or repurposed decorations, and use lighter shades of coloured paper, as dark coloured paper is often non-recyclable
- Event activities can also be conducted in a sustainable manner
  - For example, when organizing bonfires, use sustainably harvested logs, and using a single fire pit can decrease damage to the earth
  - Avoid using lighter fluid, as it can emit toxic chemicals that can be health and safety hazards

## **Event activities**

### *Party favours and prizes*

- Consider buying things with minimal packaging in bulk to reduce waste
- Avoid items that are cheap and gimmicky, as they are likely to end up in the trash. Consider providing hospitality or other gift certificates (some can also be delivered electronically), or reusable water bottles and mugs

## Event participants

- Participants and guests may also bring waste to an event. This can be single-use cups and containers, napkins or single-use plastic bottles
- Encourage participants to bring reusable items to the event, and to recycle and compost what they can

## Recycle

- Once it is clear what kind of waste will be created and where it might be coming from, it is important to form a recycling plan
- Set up clearly marked and labeled recycling and organics collection stations throughout the event to allow easy access
- Also remember two-stream recycling is in use at Western University as well as the city of London (This means paper products must be separated from containers)
- In small to medium sized events, make an announcement at the beginning informing participants where recycling and organics collection stations are
- In large events, include information regarding recycling and organics collection stations in earlier communications, and to emphasize that it is a zero-waste event
- Consider having volunteers stand by the disposal units to ensure people are disposing of their waste in the proper streams

## RECYCLING GUIDE

Recyclables		Organics	Waste to Landfill
Paper	Containers		
Magazines Flyers Newspapers Sticky notes Cardboard (e.g. clean pizza boxes) Flattened boxes Coffee Cup Sleeves	All plastics numbered 1-7 Glass jars Metal cans Foil containers Milk cartons Tetra packs (juice boxes) Rigid plastic packaging Disposable coffee cups and lids	Paper napkins and towels Food scraps (including meat products) Coffee grounds Tea bags Compostable paper plates	Styrofoam Glassware and ceramics Plastic bags Bubble wrap Foam packing peanuts Tissues Paper Chip bags and candy wrappers Plastic cutlery Plastic wrap Dark coloured paper or construction paper Waxed or foil-coated paper or boxes

## Clean Up

- Once the event has concluded, it is important to collect and recycle any remaining waste
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning supplies when cleaning up
  - Look for cleaning products that are third party certified, such as EgoLogo
- Compostable waste can be passed on to Hospitality Services Staff in dining halls for proper disposal
- All other recyclable waste can be sorted and disposed of in the garbage and recycling area of each residence

## Evaluate

- Involve the organizing team in a discussion of the successes of the zero-waste event; also address areas that still need improvement. This can encourage better coordination and participation in future events
- Updates on outcomes can also be communicated to event participants

## Special Waste Disposal:

- Batteries should not be placed in the garbage; Western offers battery recycling bins in central locations across campus to encourage proper disposal. They can be found on every floor in most buildings, under the Green Boards, as well as in Residence recycling rooms
- Electronic waste, also known as E-waste, include electronic equipment that contain harmful chemicals, such as cadmium, mercury and lead
  - There are various designated drop-off receptacles across campus for e-waste, such as in residence recycling rooms. Contact the Service Centre at Ext. 83304 for assistance if you would like to schedule the pick-up of larger quantities of e-waste.
- Wood is compostable only in small quantities
  - For proper removal of large quantities of wood or landscaping waste, please contact Client Services at extension 83304
- Pesticides and other household special waste
  - For proper removal, please contact Client Services at extension 83304
- Light bulbs, specifically Compact Florescent (CFL) tubes and bulbs, contain small amounts of mercury and must be disposed of accordingly, at one of the City of London's drop-off depots:

### Clarke Road EnviroDepot

28 Clarke Road  
Monday to Friday 12 noon - 7 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 12 noon

### Oxford Street EnviroDepot

1450 Oxford Street West  
Monday to Friday  
noon - 7 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 12 noon - 5 p.m.

### W12A Household

#### Special Waste & Electronics Depot

3502 Manning Drive  
Open Tuesday to Friday  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.