

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND MINIMISATION

Across the Waikato an growing portion of our community want to be able to do the right thing with their waste. People want to be able to recycle their plastics, cans, paper and compost their food scraps.

Events are a great opportunity to engage with the community on reducing and recycling waste. Waste minimisation encourages organisers and stallholders to design an event in a manner that not only creates less waste, but also creates waste that can be sold on. As an event organiser there are four easy steps to follow:

Reduce what comes in

All waste coming into your event will have to be managed in some way – either recycled, reused, composted or sent to landfill. If you can minimise what is coming in from the outset, significant waste reduction can be achieved.

The tricky part is lots of different people, businesses and organisations will be coming to your event bringing all sorts of things they 'need'. So, to reduce what comes into your event you will have to work with these people individually.

Something to think about

One of the best approaches is to only use vendors that share the same view on waste minimisation. Make it clear to stallholders when they register to attend your event they will need to comply to your waste minimisation and management plan.

Get them thinking about the following:

- Using signs that can be stored and reused for future events.
- Their use of paper, reusable or compostable bags instead of plastic bags.
- Not using polystyrene or plastic containers, plates, cups and cutlery. Use reusable or compostable instead (if you can be sure they are going to a suitable compostable facility).
- Offering reusable cups with a deposit system.
- Using paper napkins instead of plastic containers.

The rule is use 'certified compostable' if you know it's going to a suitable composting facility.

How much waste will there be?

This will depend on many factors such as:

- the type of event.
- the number of people that come.
- duration of the event.
- types of stalls and activities.
- what material you allow to be taken in.

Think about where the waste is going to come from

Waste can come from:

• Setting up and packing down

This may include pallets, cardboard, strapping, shrink wrap etc.

• Front of house

Mainly food and beverage packaging.

• Back of house - vendors and stallholders

Boxes, cans, plastic wrap and containers etc. This area should be managed separately from your front of house area. Firstly, because you will require bigger bins as the material will be bulky.

And secondly, you will have better opportunities to educate vendors about recycling and composting systems.

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Get the right bins

What bins you choose will depend on what materials you have decided to deal with, once you know you can start thinking about which bins and how many your event will require.

Quick tips

- Always put bins together in 'stations'.
- Think about bin placement and make a site plan.
- Put public recycling stations no more than 20 metres apart.
- If possible use the standard and recognised colours for rubbish and recycling bins.
- Think about how many people will attend your event and have enough bins available. It's better to have too many than not enough.
- Think about how often the bins will need to be emptied.
- Make space behind the scenes for storing the waste materials you have collected.

Let the people know

You can have the best system in the world, however it won't work unless you let people know how to use it properly.

Quick tips

- Good clear signage - use BIG and **bold** fonts and use the correct colour coding when referencing the bins.
- Promote waste minimisation - keep messages clear and simple and make the best use of websites, social media and promotional material.
- Staff the stations - the most effective way to get things in the right bins is to have helpers at the bin stations. Make good use of volunteers, but look after them and offer them incentives.
- Find the right people - volunteers don't necessarily need to know everything about waste minimisation at events, you can make this part of your training. They do need to be cheerful, friendly and enthusiastic.
- Remember volunteers will act as ambassadors for your event.

How did it go

Make sure you have a debrief, figuring out what worked well and what didn't is important. You can share this information with all the people who had a part to play in your event - employees, volunteers, sponsors and stall holders.

Quick tips

- Record the stations which had poorly distributed waste, such as rubbish in recycling or food waste bins.
- Record where and when rubbish was a problem, doing so will help determine where you need more bins or increase the amount of times bins were emptied.
- Request feedback from suppliers and the public about what worked and what didn't.
- Tally bags or bins of rubbish and recycling to reveal how much of each has been generated.
- Conduct an audit. This means doing accurate measurements. You will need a set of scales and an allocated area to weigh all waste and categorise it before disposal. When auditing, use protective gear such as gloves, overalls and masks.
- Plan - make sure you think about how you are going to measure before the event begins.