

# Guidelines for a Sustainable Event

## *For vendors/participants*

The community comes together to enjoy events, but in the process a tremendous amount of waste is generated, much of it recyclable. The single most effective tool in reducing waste at special events is **PLANNING AHEAD**.

This sheet was prepared to help special event participants and vendors plan ahead so that waste can be minimized and recycling and diversion can be maximized. Tools included in this guide can be used before, during AND after events.

Key steps:

1. Appoint recycling/waste management coordinator
2. Meet with event organizer
3. Evaluate waste stream
4. Assess local markets/meet with vendors
5. Select equipment
6. Education & outreach
7. Post-event & follow-up
8. Other considerations

### **Step 1: Appoint recycling/waste management coordinator**

Organize recycling task force/develop event "green team"

Recruit volunteers

Partner with non-profits and local businesses

### **Step 2: Meet with event organizer to discuss best approaches for waste minimization**

- What materials can/can't be recycled?
- How many bins will you/your patrons need? What kind (e.g waste, recycling etc...)
- Where will they be located?
- What else is the organizer doing to minimize waste? How can you participate? What other tools and resources can they provide?

### **Step 3: Evaluate waste stream. Remember: reduce then reuse then recycle**

Begin with waste minimization (reduce):

- Purchase durable signs that can be used again
- Encourage souvenir cups
- Reduced refill price for reusable cups
- Replace single serve condiments with tubs
- Encourage finger foods
- Use reusable utensils/plates
- Use cloth napkins or linens when possible

Reuse:

- Donate reusable items from the waste stream including, but not limited to, center pieces, plants, food (perishable and non-perishable), tableware, and construction and demolition materials.

Recycle:

- When you can't reduce or reuse, make sure you use recyclable materials whenever possible. AND recycle them!

**Step 4: Assess local markets/ meet with vendors**

Research and use as many local materials as possible- Sonoma is full of great resources!

**Step 5: Select equipment- use garbage and recycling bins that are clearly labeled and properly located.****Step 6: Education & outreach**

Remember to educate your staff, your patrons and your suppliers on the importance of minimizing waste. Encourage source reduction, material reuse and recycling. Spread the word with your advertising, at your booth and in any outreach and advertising that you do.

**Step 7: Post-event and follow-up**

Take a moment after the event to evaluate what did and didn't work and how you could further reduce waste at your next event.

**Step 8: Other considerations:**

In addition to minimizing waste, consider there many other ways you can make your event more sustainable. Visit these websites for ideas!

**Sustainable Communities Network**

<http://www.sustainable.org/information/susevent.html>

*This network has a great downloadable guide along with additional resources*

**City of Denver's Sustainable Event Planning Guide**

<http://www.greenprintdenver.org/>

*A comprehensive and very helpful guide for making events sustainable and reducing your ecological footprint!*