

City of
Gainesville

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Zero Waste Subcommittee
Sustainable Events/Event Recycling
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Event Recycling

Successful Event Recycling requires cooperation & coordination from all parties involved

Quick Introduction

- Events can generate a large amount of waste in a short period of time (avg. public event attendee generates 2.5 lbs. of waste per day)
- If done right, events can achieve Diversion Rates as high as 90+%, save disposal costs, promote a positive image, and reduce environment impact
- Placement of temporary public containers (not intended for permanent use at locations)
- Event sizes can range from a 50 people for neighborhood events to 10,000+ for fairs/festivals (one program might not be able to service all events)
- Preplanning, Staffing, Education, Operations, Collection Cost and other elements need to be worked out for success

Zero Waste Stations



Carts

- + Signage large, adaptable and easy visible from a distance (preferably at eye level)
- + Cart color scheme matched residential program (green = organics, black = landfill, purple = recycling)
- + No need for plastic bags or liners
- + Sturdy and reusable containers
- + Easy to service (wheels, so no lifting)
- Open tops => waste station monitors required
- Transporting carts to and from event venue
- Cleaning out carts post-event

Zero Waste Stations



Clear Stream Containers

- + Lightweight and easily portable
- + Easier to transport and uses less storage space
- + Transparent recycle and compost bags reduces contamination
- + Less monitoring required
- + High Diversion Rates generally
- Plastic bags/liners
- Can be difficult and time consuming to set up
- Susceptible to tipping over in windy conditions.

Zero Waste Stations



Cardboard Event Boxes

- + Inexpensive and easily transportable
- + Recycle box top openings container sized
- Reuse opportunities limited due to exposure to elements (rain/dew)
- Diversion rates generally lower with these types of containers
- Often single-use only due to exposure to elements (wet cardboard)
- Plastic bags/liners
- Susceptible to tipping over in windy conditions.

Zero Waste Stations



Event “Tubs”

- + Stackable (easier to store)
- + Reusable & Durable
- Not particularly “eye-catching”
- Waste station monitors required
- Lid openings all basically the same
- Transporting containers to and from event
- Plastic bags/liners

Zero Waste Stations



Recycle & Compost Only

- + No trash containers distributed at event
- + All event waste is either recyclable or compostable
- Requires extensive pre-planning with vendors
- Doesn't account for waste brought into event zone from attendees

Sustainable Event Factors



Logistics

- Equal number of public containers (trash, recycle, compost) and they be located next to each other
- Collection costs (\$ amount depending on size of the event)
- Size of the event (100 people or 10,000 people)
- Length of event (3 hours or 5 days)
- Outdoor events (fairs/festivals), Indoor events (conferences/meetings)
- Public venue events, Private venue events
- Day events, Night events

Sustainable Event Factors



Operations

- Servicing of public containers (bags, paid staff or volunteers)
- Behind the scenes - Non-public waste storage containers (dumpsters, carts, access)
- Transportation of materials (trash, recyclables, compostables)
- Hand-sort through the material that was generated (separate out contaminants)
- Hydration stations (refill water bottles)

Sustainable Event Factors



Materials

- Vendor Purchasing Guidelines => replace all single-use and/or disposal items
- Bottles & cans
- Cardboard from event vendors ("Cardboard Only" container behind the scenes)
- Biodegradables (cups, utensils)
- Food waste (composter requirements, contamination)
- Edible leftover food waste (donate)
- Special waste (animal waste, fryer/cooking oil)
- Surprise materials (plastic wrap, aluminum food trays, flyers)

Sustainable Event Factors



Outreach & Training

- Event signage on or around waste containers
- Recycling notification to event attendees in event materials or on event website
- Training of volunteers or staff to monitor waste stations throughout the event
- Vendor education (where to take empty cardboard for recycling)
- Measurements (calculate and post event diversion rate)

Sustainable Event Program Options

Event Container Loaner Program

- City loans out containers upon request (plastic liners too) for free or for a fee
- Event holder responsible for collecting and recycling the material

Notes:

- Limited number of containers to loan out
- Storage space for containers when not in use
- Staff time to manage container loan program
- Diversion results often poor when management of collection and recycling left to people inexperienced in event recycling

Sustainable Event Program Options

Part of City Services at City Venues

- Park & Rec Grounds Crews provides service?
- Recycling mandatory as part of event permit for events over a certain size

Notes:

- Determining costs/free to charge (if added fee at all?)
- Staff time to manage container (storage, cleaning)

Sustainable Event Program Options



Mix of private service & volunteers

Petty Tom Petty Birthday Bash at Depot Park

- Concert vendor provided a variety of own containers for waste receptacles (boxes & barrels)
- Keep Alachua County Beautiful provided recycling receptacles (Clear Stream) and volunteers (vols. get into concert for free)
- Vendor self-hauled recyclables one year, then changed to having a service provider supply recycle carts

Notes:

- Volunteers still need to be trained and can sometimes be unreliable
- Requires an event coordinator to be on-site to oversee operations

Sustainable Event Policies Options

- Adding Mandatory Recycling/Composting Language to Contracts/Permits
- Mandatory Event Recycling/Composting Ordinance
- Ban on materials for sale on City properties (plastic water bottles, single-use plastics, Styrofoam®)
- Diversion discounts to event planners
- Mandatory Event Diversion Goals

THANK
YOU!

