

Simple Guide to Reducing Landfill Waste at Events and Festivals

Increase Profits. Build Brand. Earn Karma Points.

Reducing landfill waste at events and festivals increases profits by:

- reducing costs from purchasing unnecessary materials,
- reducing landfill waste collection costs,
- improving brand recognition, and
- adding revenue streams by selling sustainable, branded products and sponsorships.

Liquor & Beer

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS
Eliminate single-use plastic beverage cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve beer in aluminum cans – do not pour in cups • Strategically place clearly marked / well-designed recycling containers next to trash to collect the aluminum cans (aluminum is a high value recyclable) • Market event as a Zero-Waste event and encourage people to bring their own cups • Sell reusable event branded stainless steel cups – or - • Include reusable event branded stainless steel cup with ticket purchase – or - • Implement steel cup deposit program (\$5 deposit that you get back when you return the cup) • If plastic cups are unavoidable, increase the drink cost by \$1, and offer a \$1 discount if people bring their own cup or reuse their previous cup.
Eliminate straws and swizzle sticks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Skip the Straw’ - Do not provide plastic straws. Paper straws are great. • Instruct bartenders to only provide straws when asked • Stir drinks with a common spoon – not a single use straw
Reduce beer can/bottle waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide attendees with locally brewed beer on tap in reusable cups instead of canned or bottled beer

Water & Non-Alcoholic Drinks:

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS
Eliminate single-use plastic water bottles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide water refill stations (5-10 Gallon coolers) • Sodas should be in aluminum cans, not plastic bottles • Sell powdered lemonade / ice tea from 10 Gallon coolers • Create a ‘free-water’ sponsorship package and have water coolers at sponsors table (drives traffic) • Include branded / sponsored reusable water bottle with ticket purchase. • Sell or provide reusable water bottles/cups • Provide compostable paper cups

Food:

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS
Reduce food packaging waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require food vendors to use all compostable materials, including cutlery • Develop offerings that don’t require cutlery (pizzas, sandwiches)
Reduce uneaten food waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate unused food to local charity that feeds those in need

Trash & Litter:

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS
Establish multiple waste streams – recycling, composts and landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bin selection and signage is critical. ClearstreamRecycling.com offers great portable trash, recycling and compost bins/signs • Each “waste” location should have recycling and landfill – and ideally compost – married together. No bins should never stand alone • Use different color transparent bags for recycling, landfill and compost to make collection and sorting easier • Attach good signage & physical sample of what goes in each bin to the bin • If your event is waterfront, block all access to the water. You cannot keep trash out of the water / ocean when people are partying.
Enhance recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opt for aluminum beverage containers over glass • Split cleanup crews into separate recycling and landfill teams • Educate event staff and vendors on the waste management plan • Minimize contamination by using see-through bags and lids with holes • Confirm what items are accepted by your recycling collection company • Encourage attendees to collect plastic bottles and cans in exchange for event or festival swag – make it a game • Sell ‘Recycling Partner’ sponsorships with signage
Enhance composting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm what items are accepted by your compost collection company • Get volunteers to staff the waste stations to educate
Reduce cigarette butt litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically place cigarette butt trash cans in ‘Designated Smoking Areas’ • Provide attendees with free cigarette pocket ashtrays (sponsored) • Educational signage that tells smokers that butts are not biodegradable

Marketing & Signage Materials:

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS
Reduce signage, marketing, and clothing swag waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid printing dates on banners so signage may be reused next event • Use hand stamps instead of wrist bands • Focus on web and electronic marketing • Use recycled paper and eco-printing dyes • Sell products made from reclaimed materials, cotton, or hemp (no virgin plastic products)

Green Product Vendors: Restaurantware.com, VerTerra, E A R T H P A C K, Green Paper Products, and Loliware. Traditional food service distributors also offer great choices.

Materials to avoid: Avoid plastic and absolutely no styrofoam/polystyrene. Think carefully about ‘Green’ plastic cups - while they are not made of petroleum (a plus), they can only be composted in industrial composters (which don’t exist in many states) and act like regular plastic in landfills or the ocean.

If you need help: If you have questions on any of the above, or would like contacts and resources to assist you, feel free to reach out us below.



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