

ZERO WASTE EVENTS



OVERVIEW

Zero Waste events are a great way to show your commitment to community environmental stewardship. The key to zero waste events is careful planning so event materials are reusable, recycling, or compostable. Walking Mountains Science Center partners with event producers to create successful zero waste events by providing planning support before the event and friendly staff during the event to ensure success from start to finish.

Components of Zero Waste Include:

1. **Reducing** the amount of material need to be disposed of should be the first priority. The goal is to reduce the amount of landfill waste and reduce the need for materials to be recycled or composted.
2. **Reusing** items as much as possible reduces the need to produce new items, conserves energy, and keeps materials out of the landfill.
3. **Recycling and Composting** comes after you've done all you can to reduce and reuse. A good goal is to have less than 10% of event waste go to the landfill.

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WHY ZERO WASTE

- Zero Waste aims to minimize waste and resource consumption in order to conserve energy, mitigate climate change, reduce water usage, prevent toxics creation, and minimize ecosystem destruction. (Environmental Protection Agency)
- Landfills release methane, which is 21x more potent than CO₂. Landfills also pollute ground water and land. (EPA)
- Zero Waste events help meet Eagle County's Climate Action Plan to divert 30% of waste by 2030.
- Creating things from raw materials (vs. recycling) uses 60-95% more energy and water, generating 90% more emissions (EPA)
- Landfill space is limited and some haulers must travel long distances to the landfills, burning more fuel and releasing more emissions.



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HOW IT WORKS

EVENT BRAND DEVELOPMENT

- Reduce waste to landfill, while reducing the event's carbon footprint
- Educate and empower guests to participate in community sustainability
- "Green" the event image

EVENT WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Educate vendors on sustainable options for materials and sorting techniques
- Trained staff and volunteers during the event
- Friendly interaction and education with event participants
- Manage waste disposal operations and communicate with waste hauler
- Assist with sweeps of venue during event
- Report waste diversion totals and positive environmental impact

FOOD AND BEVERAGE VENDOR EDUCATION

- Event organizer must require vendors to follow zero waste product guidelines
- Vendor products must be verified by Walking Mountains staff



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VOLUNTEERS & STAFF

Having a person (volunteer or staff) at every Zero Waste station is crucial to the success of the event. Walking Mountains volunteers and staff help share the events sustainability initiatives and educate guests.



SIGNAGE

Waste stream contamination is a big problem! Getting it right at the source is key. Having consistent and accurately marked signage helps reduce contamination and educate guests on the appropriate end stream for their products. By providing these signs, in addition to trained staff, Walking Mountains can ensure proper disposal and clean streams.



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PRODUCTS

It is required that service ware be either compostable or recyclable, both of which help decrease the amount of items entering our local landfill and making for a more sustainable event. To insure you will be using the products required it is best to contact Nina Waysdorf at ninaw@walkingmountains.org with a list of all the items that you plan on using prior to purchasing.

Acceptable Containers and Service ware

All **un-coated** paper containers including plates, bowls, cups
BPI – Certified compostable containers
BPI – Certified compostable utensils (spoons, forks, knives)
Paper napkins and paper towels
Wax paper or deli wrap
Plastic bottles #1 & #2 only
Aluminum cans
Corrugated cardboard/box's

Non-Acceptable Containers and Service ware

Non-compostable plastic utensils
Plastic cups
Compostable PLA cups
Straws
Plastic-coated paper products
Plastic clamshells
Styrofoam products
Glass
Plastic wrap
Plastic lids
Single-use condiment pouches
Plastic bags and/or Plastic film

***This list is specific to Compost & Single-Stream Recycling use at Events
Please ask for further information if Dual-Stream information is needed.***



Food Containers such as plates, bowls, trays, & clamshells must be paper, bamboo, or sugarcane based. Check for “BPI Certified Compostable” label to ensure they break down at our facility and are NOT lined with plastic.

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Utensils MUST be labeled “BPI Certified Compostable” or made from wooden or other natural material. Our local recycling and compost facilities cannot accept utensils made from recycled material/content or simply labeled “Biodegradable.”



Beverage Containers such as aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and Tetra Paks® are accepted for recycling. Currently, our local hauler for single-stream cannot recycle plastic cups. For hot cup drinks, they must clearly be labeled “BPI Certified Compostable”.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIERS

Eco Products: <https://www.ecoproducts.com/>

World Centric: <http://www.worldcentric.org/>

Going Green Services: <http://www.goinggreenservices.com/PET-Clear-Cup-16-oz-p/esp16.htm>

Biodegradable Products Institute:

<http://products.bpiworld.org/?search=&category=59&type=2>

Green Paper Products: <https://greenpaperproducts.com/>

First Choice Wooden Cutlery: <https://www.firstchoiceware.com/>

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EVENT FAQ'S

Can you compost meat, bones and dairy?

Yes, because it is commercial composted anything that was once living or came from something living can be composted. Our local commercial facility heats the compost to a higher temp which allows for these items to be included.

What does Walking Mountains services provide? Is hauling included?

Walking Mountains provides a coordinator and support staff to handle all source separation and end disposal of each material at your event. This includes event setup and breakdown. We work with haulers but do not take the material from the event to be processed. If you are requesting our services you will also need to be sure you work with the town or local hauler to have the proper receptacles onsite.

What is a good alternative for plastic cups if our hauler cannot recycle them?

Consider encouraging guests to bring their own cup to receive a discount. Otherwise, we recommend using aluminum cans, which can be recycled infinitely, or BPI Certified Compostable hot cups made from paper.

How can I make sure vendors purchase the right products?

We are happy to provide resources for Vendors and speak to them directly to determine best product. It also helps for events to put recommended or mandatory rules in place to encourage vendor compliance.

What if my event is catered and we have excess food we do not want to go to waste?

More important than composting or recycling is reducing food waste. The Eagle River Valley Food Bank is a great resource for catered events with excess food. Please consider including them in your efforts to be more sustainable.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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