

How to Host a GREENER EVENT

Ideas & Opportunities for Waste Reduction



idea #1



Eliminate disposable items
or find environmentally-
friendly alternatives

- Ask patrons to bring their own water bottles, travel mugs, and/or cutlery
- Enlist volunteers or use a rental service to wash reusable dishes, cutlery, and linens
- Sell reusable water bottles and bring in a water truck refilling station
- Consider posting central display boards or signs instead of printing individual programs
- Make banner signs that you can reuse at multiple events
- Eliminate unnecessary plastic such as straws, plastic bags, wrapping, and novelty giveaway items
- Use compostable containers over plastic, recyclable plastic containers over non-recyclable plastic, and choose recyclable items with post-consumer recycled content

idea #2

Organize recycling and
compost pick-up

- Ensure you have enough blue bins on site during the event
- Arrange for a compost collection service to drop off and pick up green bins for food scraps and other compostable items such as napkins, and some cardboard

idea #3



Sort all waste

- Organize specific locations for waste disposal and schedule people to help patrons sort their waste into **compost** (food waste and some other items), **recycling** (cans, some plastics, paper—check the City’s blue box list at stratfordcanada.ca/recycling), and **garbage** (all non-compostable and non-recyclable waste)
- Eliminate stand-alone bins that don’t promote sorting. Direct everyone to your waste stations to ensure recycling and compost bins are not contaminated. Items in contaminated bins can end up in the landfill.

A “BRING-YOUR-OWN” SUCCESS STORY

For the **Alzheimer Society’s 2018 Soup’s On** soup tasting fundraiser, a social media campaign and prize draw encouraged people to bring their own spoons to the event. As a result, **approximately 1,000 fewer disposable spoons were distributed than the year before!** They also provided cutlery spoons, water jugs, and glasses for the judges’ table.



idea #4



Communicate your goals, offer incentives and measure success

- Use social media, publicity materials, event signage, and volunteers to communicate green initiatives, goals, and results
- Offer reduced admission to patrons who bring reusable bottles/cups/cutlery and/or have a raffle draw they can enter as a reward for being green
- Track and share the amount of waste diverted (gallons/litres of compost and recyclables), disposable items not used (paper plates, etc.), or reusable items brought by patrons (cutlery, reusable water bottles, etc.)
- Encourage patrons to share photos of their waste reduction achievements
- Set a waste reduction goal for the next event based on your results
- Celebrate and publicize your success!

idea #5

Develop a sustainability policy for your events

- Match your event planning values with any organizational values that promote caring and stewardship
- Set goals and identify tools for green initiatives that address waste reduction, venue selection, transportation, overall carbon footprint, and supporting small business and local suppliers



800+ ATTENDEES AND ONLY 1 BAG OF GARBAGE

The **River Rock Music Festival** is a day-long, 10-hour event near St. Marys that welcomes about 800 music lovers, plus musicians and vendors, and has a mandate for zero landfill waste. They sell souvenir reusable hot/cold beverage containers and offer free potable water on-site. Disposable water bottles are banned—attendees can't bring them and vendors can't sell them. Food vendors must have compostable or recyclable containers, plus reusable plates are donated for the event and washed by volunteers at washing stations. Volunteers also ensure proper sorting of waste at recycling/garbage stations. So far, the event has produced less than one bag of garbage each year.



Get the full **Guide to Hosting a Greener Event** at cfwstratford.ca/waste-reduction for more information on how to implement these ideas.

Visit stratfordcanada.ca/recycling for details on the City's waste reduction initiatives and recycling.

We'd love to hear about your successes and best practices!

E-mail us at: cfwstratford@gmail.com