

Commercial Recycling Toolkit

Special Events



Reducing waste makes economic and environmental sense

Highly effective waste stream management programs at special events can help to minimize your net operating costs by reducing waste disposal expenditures. Special events have the potential to generate large quantities of waste and recyclables by the public, vendors, concessionaires, and exhibitors. When looking for a place to host an event, keep in mind that many venues already have recycling programs in place. Collecting recyclables at special events will require planning that includes a team of volunteers to support your efforts. This toolkit will provide assistance in setting up a recycling and waste reduction program for your special event.

Recycling Plan

Step 1: Identify a recycling program coordinator

Venues without a permanent recycling infrastructure will require a lot of planning to ensure the success of a recycling program at a special event. An event manager or their designee should plan to oversee the recycling program. To design an effective recycling program for a special event, the recycling program coordinator should:

- Obtain the support of the event partner organizations
- Assemble a green team to help plan, implement, and manage recycling during your event
- Involve all other stakeholders: include concessionaires, vendors, waste haulers, exhibitors, and volunteers in planning the logistics (see "EPA" under additional resources)
- Have trash and recycling bins emptied regularly so waste does not end up in recycling bins
- Plan to promote and publicize recycling before, during, and after the event

Step 2: Identify materials to be collected

Work with event partners, vendors, concessionaires, and exhibitors to approximate the amounts and types of wastes to be generated during your special event. Identify where wastes are likely to be discarded, and whether they will be recyclable or compostable. Encourage vendors and concessionaires to use compostable paper products instead of Styrofoam plates, cups, and containers (which are neither traditionally recyclable nor compostable). Drinks can also be served in reusable/refillable souvenir cups, or alternatively, in recyclable bottles or cans. The following types of recyclables can be commingled into single-stream recycling bins:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrugated cardboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Steel cans | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed paper (no used napkins) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glass bottles and jars | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> Tetra-pack milk & juice boxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bottles, jugs, containers | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazines and catalogs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum cans | <input type="checkbox"/> Boxboard | |

Step 2: Recycling containers

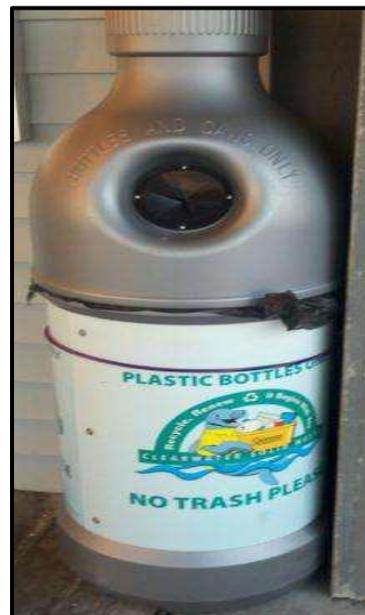
A key component to the design of an effective program involves the selection and placement of your recycling containers. Organizers can choose to rent, purchase, or use disposable containers. Some recycling service providers may supply containers as part of their contract. Considerations include:

- Convenience, availability, and cost-effectiveness
- What is being consumed?
- Container placement: Traffic flow, gates, security checks, water stations, portable toilets
- Two recycling containers for every trash can
- Clear stream containers provide visual to encourage recycling
(*Cue - place recyclables in bottom of container at start of special event to help secure container and encourage recycling*)
- Color-coded containers: blue - recycling; green – organics; black – trash
- Plastic recycling containers shaped like soda bottles used by Coke – should be secured because theft could be an issue

Bin placement – next to trash cans and at access or security points



Bin types

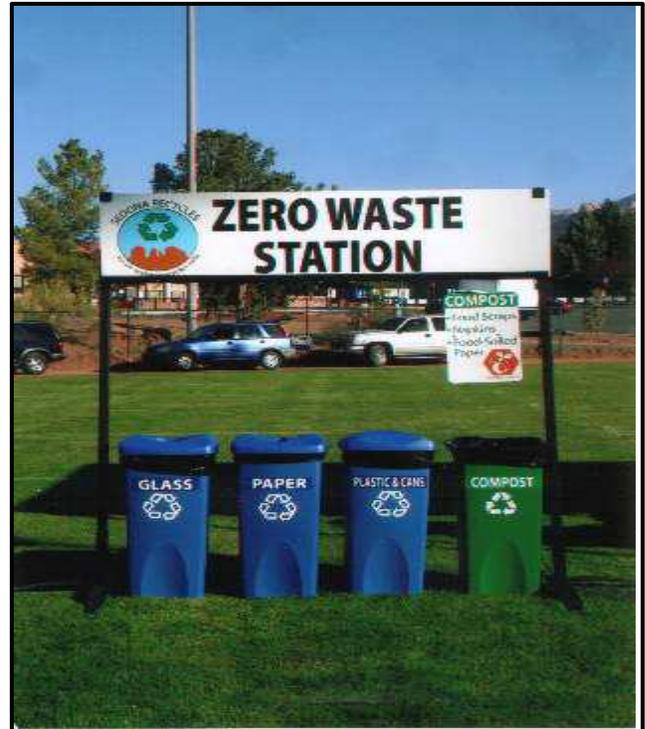
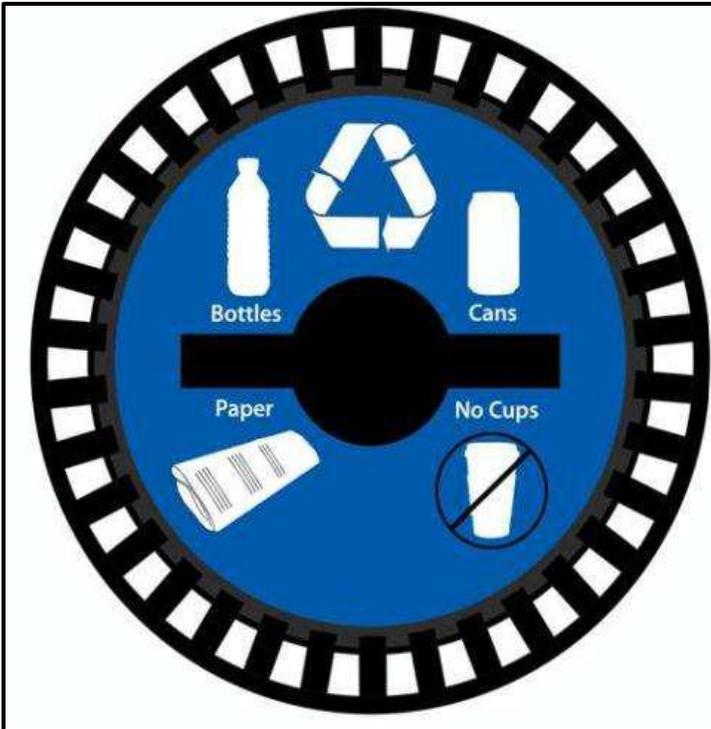


Step 3: Education and Messaging

Clear and noticeable signs to direct the public to the location of recycling containers – may include banners, brightly-colored signs, and posters. Tips include:

- Use the action word “Recycle” vs. “Recycling” in messaging
- Clear and simple labeling with icons and language to identify materials and placed near hole in receptacle
- Include what is acceptable
- Avoid the use of plastic resin codes to identify materials
- Zero waste stations may require volunteers for monitoring

- Colorful, color coordinated signage at zero waste stations with 3-dimensional components added
- Examples: “Recycling only – No trash” and “Trash only - No Recycling”)



Step 4: Volunteers

- Teams of volunteers can serve to monitor containers during the event to lessen contamination issues
- Volunteers could circulate through crowds with containers to retrieve recyclables and promote recycling at events (e.g. parades, stadiums)

Additional Resources:

Delaware Recycles: www.recycling.delaware.gov

Download the How to Recycle guide and Commercial Recycling toolkits.

DNREC, Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances online at: www.dnrec.delaware.gov/whs/awm or call (302) 739-9403

Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) online at: www.dswa.com or call: 1-800-404-7080.

EPA: How to involve concessionaires & vendors in your recycling program
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/rrr/rogo/documents/vendors.pdf>

EPA: Sample letter for concessionaires & vendors
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/rrr/rogo/program/vendorlr.htm>

Food Bank of Delaware: <http://www.fbd.org/> (Food donations)

Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) – Special events guidance and case studies
<http://www.nerc.org/documents/index.html#SE>