



Event Planning Guide

Manage and Minimize Waste at Community, Family, and Corporate Events

As an event coordinator, you will need to manage the waste produced at your event. This guide will help you run a low-waste, litter-free event and provide a waste system that is convenient for your guests to use.

1. Minimize your event waste from the start.

Food and drink, plates and cups, and bottles and cans, are the biggest contributors to the waste produced at special events. You can cut down on the amount of waste you need to handle at your event by providing fewer disposable items to your guests.

- Contact your food vendors and/or caterer.
 - Ask vendors to serve beverages in recyclable containers.
 - For to-go food, ask vendors to skip the plastic bag.
 - Ask vendors to refill guests' personal water bottles and travel mugs.
 - Request that condiments be served in bulk dispensers to cut down on small pieces of trash that are easily littered.
- Durable dishware is available to borrow through the Event Lending Library.
- Remind guests to bring their water bottles and travel mugs to your event. Post the suggestion on your website, social media, and in registration emails.
- Use durable cups for beer/wine festivals. Provide a donation collection bin for commemorative cups in case guests do not take them home.
- Provide fresh fruits and fresh baked goods for volunteer snacks to help reduce packaging waste.

2. Determine what types of waste you'll have.

Garbage	Recyclables	Food Waste	Donation
Paper Plates	Plastic Bottles	Breads and Grains	Packaged Foods
Paper Cups	Aluminum Cans	Fruits and Vegetables	Fruits and Vegetables
Plastic Cups	Cardboard	Meats and Cheeses	
Compostable Cups			Commemorative Cups
Paper Napkins	Glass, in a separate bin	No compostable	Decorations
Plastic Utensils		serviceware. No foil. No	
Compostable Utensils	(Plastic bags/film wrap may	plastic.	
Wrappers	be recycled at many local grocery stores).		

You may borrow receptacles and equipment from the Event Lending Library to help you collect these items at your event.

3. Decide how many waste receptacles to borrow.

Guests will need convenient locations to dispose of their waste. Plan to have waste stations near eating areas, stages, port-o-potties, entrances/exits, and water/aid stations.

On the site map for your event, mark each location you'll want a waste station. Count the number of locations to determine how many receptacles you'll need to borrow.

Use the buddy system: Always place garbage and recycling receptacles side by side. This will help guests put the right items in the right receptacle.

4. Borrow equipment from the Event Lending Library.

Fill out a reservation form for the equipment you'd like to borrow and choose appointment times for picking up and returning the equipment.

The lending library is open 10 a.m.- 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-3 p.m. on Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri, by appointment only. Appointments will take approximately 20 minutes. Staff will help load/unload your vehicle and give a demonstration of the equipment.

Plan to bring a vehicle with enough space for the equipment.

- 10 ClearStreams fit in the empty trunk of a car.
- 20 ClearStreams fit in an SUV with the seats folded down.
- 30 ClearStreams fit in the bed of a truck, but tie downs or a cargo cover are required.



5 garbage and 5 recycling ClearStreams.

5. Arrange for volunteer help.

Recruit volunteers to set up waste stations, empty receptacles, and clean up after your event.

Alternatively, you may hire labor for your event.

[Elysium Events](#): 503-789-2018.

[The Broomsmen](#): 541-213-1131.

[ZipEco](#): 888-527-5868.

[County Corrections Crew](#): Lisa Biffle, 360-397-6045.



Cruise the 'Couve volunteers.

6. Estimate how much waste you'll have.

- The amount of trash and recycling you produce depends on how many guests you have and the disposable items provided. For many events, planning for .1 gallons of trash and .1 gallons of recycling per guest gives a good ballpark estimate. If using paper plates and disposable cups, add another .5 gallons of trash and .1 gallons of recycling for each meal you anticipate will be served. Adjust these estimates based on the items you plan to serve at your event.
- If you are hosting an annual event, check your notes from last year. How full were your dumpsters? Or, how many bags of garbage/recycling did you haul to the transfer station?

7. Choose how you will dispose of waste after your event.

After your event, you will need to dispose of the waste you collected from your guests. You may order hauling service, self-haul to a transfer station, or reserve the dumpsters in Esther Short Park.

Hauling Service

Dumpsters/Drop-boxes are available for garbage and mixed recycling. Carts are available for glass recycling and food waste. A variety of sizes are available.

Call customer service for hauling options and service prices: 866-892-9269.

Self-Haul

Event coordinators may also self-haul garbage and recycling to [local transfer stations](#) for disposal.

Esther Short Park

Event coordinators holding events at Esther Short Park may arrange to use the dumpsters in the park enclosure. Contact the [City of Vancouver](#) to make arrangements: 360-487-8630.



Hauling Service



Self-Haul



Esther Short Park Enclosure

8. Planning Assistance

Waste Connections: An event specialist can help with your waste planning. Call or email to discuss your site plan, anticipated waste volume, recycling/food waste options, sustainability goals, and more!

Call: 360-449-8394. **Email:** melissajo@wcnx.org

Master Composter/Recycler: Invite a [Master Composter/Recycler](#) volunteer to join your planning team.

Call: 360-397-2121 ext 4961. **Email:** mcr@clark.wa.gov

9. Plan for next year.

If you host an annual event, help next year's coordinators by keeping notes on your waste planning.

- Save a copy of your Event Lending Library reservation form.
- Note if your dumpsters were over-full or partially empty.
- Mark the locations of your waste stations on your site plan.
- Ask your volunteers and guests for feedback.
- Write down any observations you have during your event.

10. Helpful Links

Washington State

[Department of Ecology Event Recycling](http://ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/eventrecycling), ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/eventrecycling

City of Vancouver

[Special Event Planning](http://cityofvancouver.us/parksrec/page/event-planning), cityofvancouver.us/parksrec/page/event-planning

[Garbage and Recycling](http://cityofvancouver.us/publicworks), cityofvancouver.us/publicworks

Clark County

[Master Composter/Recycler Program](http://clarkgreenneighbors.org/mcr/master-composter), clarkgreenneighbors.org/mcr/master-composter

[Green Business Program](http://clarkgreenbiz.com), clarkgreenbiz.com

Portland, OR

[City of Portland Event Recycling](http://portlandoregon.gov/bps/43211), portlandoregon.gov/bps/43211

[Community Environmental Services](http://pdx.edu/ces/portland-event-recycling), pdx.edu/ces/portland-event-recycling

Get your own event waste receptacles.

[Keep America Beautiful Bin Grant](http://kab.org/coca-cola-recycling-grant), kab.org/coca-cola-recycling-grant

[ClearStream Recycling](http://clearstreamrecycling.com), clearstreamrecycling.com

Event Waste Management Companies

[Elysium Events](http://elysiumeventsllc.com), elysiumeventsllc.com

[The Broomsmen](http://thebroomsmen.com), thebroomsmen.com

[ZipEco](http://zipeco-recycling.com), zipeco-recycling.com