



ZERO WASTE EVENT TOOLKIT

FOR CAMPUS EVENTS

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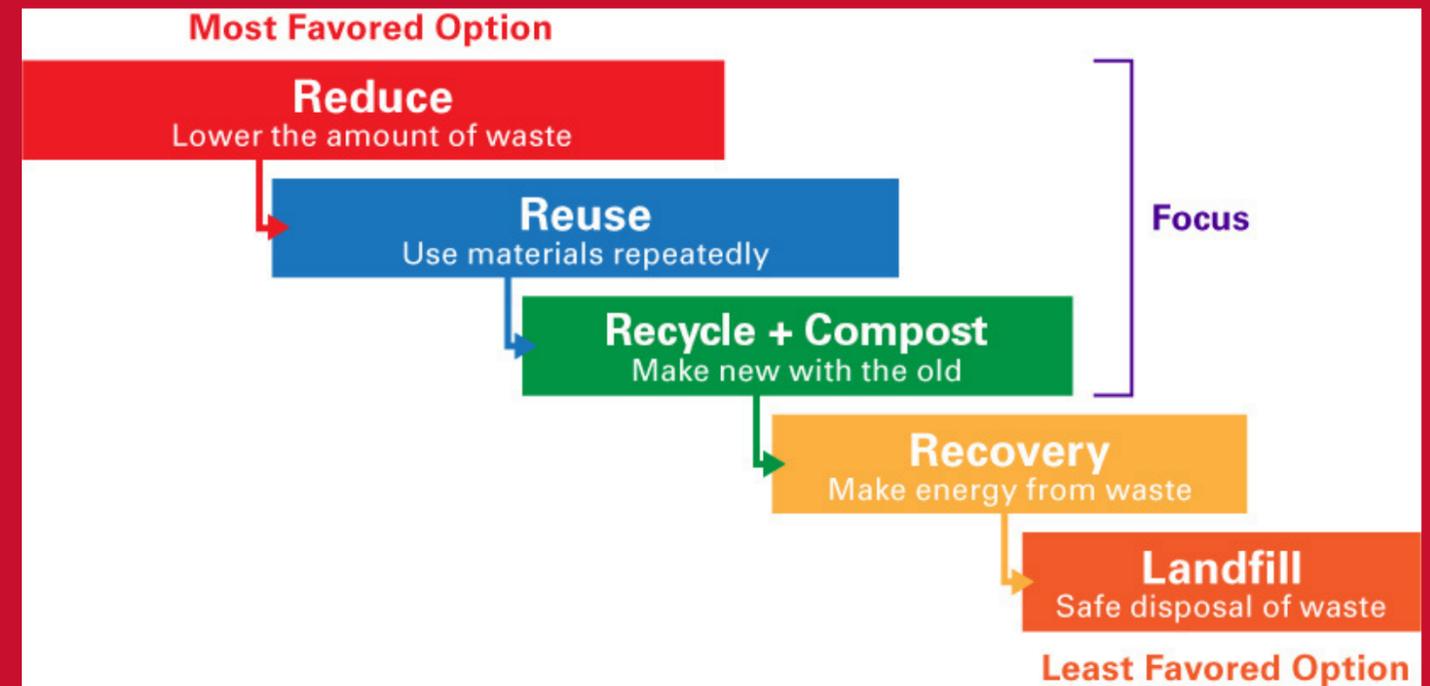


ZERO WASTE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Zero waste is defined as *“the conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.”* - Zero Waste International Alliance (2018)

At Iowa State, zero waste is a lifestyle, philosophy, movement and solution to reduce consumption, minimize waste and maximize recycling and reuse on campus.

It is a process aiming to eliminate rather than manage waste. Not only is zero waste about recycling and diversion from landfill, it encourages departure from the norms of a “take, make and dispose” culture throughout all campus operations.



WHY GO ZERO?

Zero waste events at Iowa State support the university's zero waste goal of achieving at least 85% diversion from the landfill by year 2025. Promotion of zero waste through events is strategic in building awareness about waste reduction, encourage reuse of materials and ensuring that materials that can be recycled are not landfilled by departments, clubs and group planning events on campus.

Zero waste events also offer engagement opportunities supporting robust participation in campus recycling and resue programs, enhanced sustainability education, reduced waste management costs and the development of responsible consumerism of students, faculty and staff.



HOW TO PLAN A ZERO WASTE EVENT

The key to a great zero waste event is thoughtful planning! Follow these steps to help navigate achieving zero waste at your next event.



BEFORE THE EVENT

1. BUILD A GREEN TEAM

- Enlist members in your organization (or recruit volunteers) to create a Green Team. This Green Team will be a subcommittee that will take part in sustainability discussions and guide your organization in zero waste efforts.
- This team can also spearhead recruiting, scheduling and training event volunteers.



2. CHOOSE A VENUE

- Determining whether your event will be indoor or outdoor is an important first step in all the rest of your planning efforts, and is a requirement to know before reserving space and completing an [Event Authorization Form](#).
- Once you have your venue determined, you can confirm availability and reserve zero waste receptacles, including recycling and composting bins.

[LINK TO RESERVING SPACE ON CAMPUS](#)

Zero Waste Venue Questions:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> How many trash cans does the venue provide?" | <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a cost for the receptacles? If so, how much? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How many zero waste receptacles (recycling and compost bins) can be provided? | <input type="checkbox"/> Can additional zero waste receptacles be brought in if needed? If so, by whom and at what cost? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are there enough available to offer zero waste receptacles at each trash can location? | <input type="checkbox"/> Will the contents of the zero waste receptacles be managed by the venue during the event? If so, how often? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Will the contents of the zero waste receptacles be handled by the venue at the end of the event? If not, what waste management options are available? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are there any donation options available for any leftover refreshments? |



3. IDENTIFY YOUR WASTE

- The type of waste you generate will depend on the event your organization or department is hosting. Therefore, it is important to determine the type of waste your event could potentially create.
- Waste can be generated by:
 - Food and Beverages
 - Check-In Tables
 - Organization and Vendor Tables
 - Event Giveaways
 - Nametags



4. ENGAGE VENDORS

- Communicate early and often with organizations and vendors about your zero waste goal and offer waste reduction ideas to them for their planning efforts:
 - Request refreshment options that require as little service ware as possible and are provided on reusable, recyclable or compostable service ware and refreshment options.
 - Encourage electronic information sharing through QR codes or request signup, instead of handing out materials.
 - Suggest reusable and durable giveaway items that will offer options for sustainable choices and behavior.
 - Send follow-up communication with vendors and organizations to confirm zero waste goals and their specific strategies in supporting these goals.



5. CREATE A WASTE STATION SITE PLAN

A waste station is an area where trash cans and recycling and composting bins are all located together, ensuring increased recycling and composting and decreased contamination of items that cannot be recycled or composted. An important component to a zero waste event is creating an event layout plan that designates where waste stations will be placed and how to ensure they are effective. In completing your plan, include the following:

- Confirm the number of trash cans and recycling and composting bins you have available for your event.
- Place your waste stations strategically, according to where you expect the most waste: near food and beverage tables, in high traffic areas, by entryways and exits and close to event-sponsored activities.
- Enlist members from your Green Team and/or event volunteers to monitor waste stations and discuss with attendees the event's zero waste goal.
- Weigh bins and trash cans before and after the event to collect data on waste collected and diverted from landfilling.



6. LABEL YOUR BINS

To ensure the most success in achieving event zero waste, it is important that attendees understand exactly what they should do and how to correctly do it. Ensure every waste station is designated and easy to locate and that each bin in the waste station is clearly marked with what should be put into it. Standard signing is available on the [ISU Recycling Services website](#) for use at events. You can also choose to design your own signs that still offers consistent information, but better fits the needs of your event. Here are a few examples:

COMPOST BINS


FOOD WASTE


TEA BAGS &
COFFEE GROUNDS


BONES


TISSUES


PAPER TOWELS
& NAPKINS

<p>FOOD WASTE TEA BAGS COFFEE GROUNDS BONES</p>	<p>TISSUES PAPER TOWELS NAPKINS</p>
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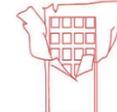
LANDFILL & AMES RESOURCE RECOVERY


PLASTIC STRAWS


PLASTIC BAGS


PLASTIC UTENSILS


PIZZA BOXES


CANDY WRAPPERS

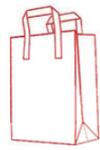
<p>PLASTIC BAGS/WRAPS PLASTIC STRAWS PIZZA BOXES STYROFOAM</p>	<p>LIQUIDS PLASTIC UTENSILS CANDY WRAPPERS</p>
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SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING


PAPER BAGS


POP CANS


TIN CANS


GLASS/PLASTIC
BOTTLES

*Rise containers before recycling

<p>PAPER PAPERBOARD PAPER BAGS GLASS BOTTLES*</p>	<p>PLASTICS #1-7* ALUMINUM* TIN/STEEL CANS*</p>
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7. COMMUNICATE AND PROMOTE

Hosting a zero waste event is significant. Use multiple outlets to highlight your commitment to sustainability and challenge others to set a zero waste goal for their events.

- Market through social media platforms (create a FaceBook event, write a Blogpost, put pictures on Instagram, stream live at the event)
- Send a mass email to students
- Announce your event in class or at organization meetings
- Reserve signboards and/or the Memorial Union marquee
- Post your event on the Live Green! Calendar
- Create a chalk announcement
- College display TV announcements
- Tell your friends, colleagues and coworkers and ask them to help the word



8. ENGAGE YOUR ATTENDEES

- Offer incentives to your attendees before the event and encourage them to bring reusable items (i.e. refillable water bottle, reusable bag).
- Have incentives for attendees who bring reusable items with them.
- Provide zero waste giveaways for attendees and hands-on activities that leave guests empowered to continue to be zero waste.



9. MAKE SUSTAINABLE PURCHASES

13

When securing supplies for your event, it is important to find materials that do not produce waste or produce little waste. Find ways to either reduce waste from your event materials or not create waste in the first place.

- Avoid products that cannot be recycled, composted or reused.
- Buy items in bulk, rather than packaged individually.
- Purchase items with recyclable or compostable packaging.
- Eliminate or limit printed materials and offer electronic or emailed options.
- Lower your energy and emissions waste by purchasing supplies from local businesses.



DURING THE EVENT

11. CONNECT WITH VENDORS AND ORGANIZATIONS

When organizations and vendors arrive for your event, review the zero waste event guidelines and resources.

- Point out waste station locations around the venue.
- Review waste handling procedures during and after the event and ensure all questions are answered.
- Request their assistance in reminding attendees to recycle, compost and reduce their waste while attending the event.



12. CONNECT WITH WASTE STATION MONITORS

Welcome your event volunteers as they arrive for their shift to monitor the waste stations and bins. Thank them for their vital service and support in helping achieve the event's zero waste goal.

- Outline instructions on volunteer responsibilities and answer questions.
- Confirm understanding of each waste station collection bin and what should and should not be placed in each bin.
- Review how to empty bins and where/place to take bin contents.

Waste Station Supplies

- Gloves
- Trash, Recycling and Composting Bags
- Hand Wipes
- Hand Sanitizer



13. COMMUNICATE WITH ATTENDEES

When your attendees arrive have a check-in table to inform them of your zero waste goals. Provide information to them on how they can help make your event zero waste.

- Have a poster of the layout of the venue that highlights where the waste station(s) are located.
- During the event, periodically make announcements to remind attendees to recycle and compost, and where to find the waste station(s).



14. ENJOY AND OBSERVE

- Monitor and observe waste behavior during the event.
- Collect plenty of pictures to document your zero waste event.
- Make notes and collect data throughout the event to determine what is effective and what is not effective for future planning.
- Take time to enjoy your event and all of the success and impact of the hard work your team has put into supporting Iowa State University's Zero Waste Initiative.



AFTER THE EVENT

15. CLEAN UP AND TEAR DOWN

You have put in the hard work to ensure a successful zero waste event, now it is time to ensure you clean up and tear down appropriately.

- Ensure to have staff or volunteers monitor bins (and dumpsters if necessary) to the very end.
- Designate staff or volunteers to remove signage, tear down all used waste stations and transport full bags of recycling, compost, and landfill waste to a collection point closest to your event location. If outdoor event, properly dispose of your trash in trash dumpster but leave both compost and recycling at the collection point.
- Ensure to donate all unused food (if any) and other items to local community organizations like [Food at First](#), [The Shop Food Pantry](#).
- Ensure to reuse items for future events- signs, posters, decorations, supplies.

16. ANALYZE DATA

To successfully assess how well your event was, it is important you collect data.

- Consider data such as number of participants who attended your event, amount of recyclables collected, amount of compost collected, amount of food donated and amount of waste sent to landfill.
- Once data is collected, evaluate and analyze data, compare data to previous events (if available), celebrate your successes, identify opportunities for improvement and share information with recycling@iastate.edu.



17. GATHER FEEDBACK

- Send out post-event surveys for vendors, organizations and attendees - if you have contact information.
- Immediately schedule post-event meeting with team members to discuss how the event went in general.
- Reach to relevant campus service providers (FP&M, Event Management Office, EH&S etc.) for feedback on improving your events next time.

18. GIVE THANKS, CELEBRATE AND SHARE

- Write thank you notes to participating organizations and contributors.
- Consider posting a thank you slider on your website to reach a broader audience that may have been at your event.
- Post on social media, thanking event participants, attendees and other related organizations.
- Host a Green Team celebration gathering (go out for ice cream, pizza party, etc.) to show your appreciation for your planning team!



CHECKLIST

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Build a Green Team
- Choose a Venue
- Identify Your Waste
- Engage Vendors
- Create a Waste Station Site Plan
- Label Your Bins
- Communicate and Promote
- Engage Your Attendees
- Make Sustainable Purchases

DURING THE EVENT

- Connect with Vendors and Organizations
- Connect with Waste Station Monitors
- Communicate with Attendees
- Enjoy and Observe

AFTER THE EVENT

- Clean Up and Tear Down
- Analyze Data
- Gather Feedback
- Give Thanks, Celebrate and Share.

RESOURCES

[EVENT AUTHORIZATION FORM](#)

[SPACE RESERVATION FORM](#)

[ISU RECYCLING SERVICES WEBSITE](#)

[MASS EMAIL FORM](#)

[SIGN BOARD RESERVATION](#)

[MEMORIAL UNION MARQUEE RESERVATION](#)

[LIVE GREEN! CALENDAR EVENT SUBMISSION](#)



STAY CONNECTED

AYODEJI OLUWALANA
RECYCLING AND SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR

AOLUWALA@IASTATE.EDU
515-509-9785

WWW.FPM.IASTATE.EDU/RECYCLING/



TWITTER



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



