



Zero Waste Event Guidelines for Exhibitors, Vendors and Caterers

The University of Michigan-Flint has made a commitment to minimize its environmental footprint and improve the quality of life in our community by holding zero waste events. Achieving zero waste requires your partnership and participation. The following guidelines and tips will help us reach our goals. Please educate your employees and volunteers about the Zero Waste program. Thank you for joining us in this significant endeavor.

Here's What You Can Do to Help Achieve Zero Waste

Recycle, Compost, Landfill

Zero Waste Stations are provided in central locations throughout the event venue and accept materials for recycling, composting, landfill and waste water treatment. Volunteers educate and assist everyone on the proper use of the Zero Waste Stations.

Acceptable at the Zero Waste Stations

For Recycling

- Clean plastic containers - numbers ♻️ 1 through 7
- Aluminum and steel cans
- Glass
- Paper-newspapers, fliers, magazines, brochures
- Cardboard - flatten & place next to Zero Waste Station
 - ⊘ No food contaminated materials
 - ⊘ No foam products
 - ⊘ No plastic bags or plastic wrap
 - ⊘ No straws
 - ⊘ No liquids

For Composting

- Food scraps
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Chopsticks

For Waste Water Treatment

Beverage liquids

For the Landfill

Materials not accepted for recycling or composting

Prevent Waste AKA Source Reduction

Source reduction means eliminating waste by choosing products with little or no packaging and thinking about what happens to a product after the event is over. Decorations, frilly toothpicks and inedible food garnishments are examples of products that can be eliminated to achieve zero waste. Use source reduction as a catalyst for creativity and reuse to find alternatives for these types of products.

Exhibit Space Considerations

- Use a reusable rather than disposable table cover
- Provide consumable give-away items or those made with post-consumer recycled content
- Distribute items that will help participants reduce waste or improve the environment i.e. reusable bag, drink container, native plants seeds, potted plants
- Avoid pre-filled "goodie bags" – allow visitors to only take what they want
- Decorate with reusable flags and banners rather than balloons
- Reduce paper use and printing costs - Redesign company brochures to half or quarter sheet size and direct interested parties to the company website for detailed information
- When printing, choose the highest amount of post-consumer content available
- Avoid "fluorescent", "neon" and "bright" papers as they are not recyclable
- Choose reusable booth signage and displays
- Store discards in a paper bag or box until you have time to place them at a Zero Waste Station

Food Vendor Considerations

- Consider the use of finger foods or buffet-style serving
- Source food locally and buy organic, when possible
- Hand out cutlery, straws, lids and napkins by request
- Serve condiments in bulk rather than single-serve packets; purchase concentrated beverage mixes
- Use refillable or reusable containers and serving products
- Use ASTM D6400 or D6868 certified compostable products
- Buy recycled content supplies (cups and napkins) or with low impact to the environment (cleaners)
- Use minimal packaging and avoid pre-packaged foods like candy and granola bars, chips, etc. These wrappers are landfill items
- Donate leftover food to area shelters or compost where feasible
- Utilize washable cloth towels or sponges instead of paper towels to clean up behind the counter (Check local health codes to verify this is acceptable)
- Avoid using non-recyclable or difficult-to-recycle materials, such as foam products

What is Zero Waste?



Source:
Zero Waste Alliance

Zero waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use.