

## Planning and Attending Green Events

Planning a green event means organizing a meeting, concert, workshop, festival and fundraising event in ways that minimize the environmental burdens imposed by the activities.

**Green event planners make use of environmentally sound practices to reduce waste, resources, energy use; to make wise purchasing decisions; to plan for travel, transportation, food provision and environmentally- friendly accommodations.**

Green conventions, meetings, conferencing and events are part of an international movement to achieve a sustainable world economy and livable planet.

To begin, consider creating a personal, corporate or committee sustainability statement; for example:

*“We will innovatively and resourcefully discuss our event’s carbon footprint and collaborate on ways to reduce the negative consequences.”*

The following green event checklist may also help you think of ways to plan for an environmentally-friendly event:

### Green Event Checklist:

#### Travel:

- Encourage participants to walk, cycle, car pool or take public transit to your event.
- Include transit and bike route information on your website or other advertising material.
- Organize a secure bike lock up area on site.

#### Waste Reduction:

- Avoid paper wherever possible. Use dry erase boards, flip chart paper or power point presentations instead of handouts.
- Double side any handouts and use recycled paper when possible.
- Use eco-friendly cleaning products.

#### Recycling:

- Compost your food waste. Provide a compost garbage container for food vendors and participants.
- Learn what types of materials can be recycled.
- Donate excess food to the local Food Bank.
- Ensure that labelled recycling bins are present at your event. Situate them next to garbage containers to prevent recycled material beings placed in the garbage containers.
- Remind participants to recycle. You can promote recycling during opening ceremonies, during announcements, as people prepare to leave the event site.

**Food Services:**

- Use local suppliers to reduce gasoline use for delivery.
- Encourage participants to bring their own mug for beverages
- Sell or provide reusable Festival Mugs. These items can also act as promotional or fundraising items and can be taken home as a souvenir after the event. Include link
- Encourage vendors to purchase compostable, biodegradable food service products (e.g. plates, cups, utensils).
- Serve fair trade coffee and tea
- Avoid excessive packaging. Purchase food items in bulk (e.g. cheese and crackers and bagels) to reduce waste.
- Avoid providing bottled water.
- Encourage vendors to sell in season, organic fruit and vegetables

**Promotion:**

- Print all advertising on post-consumer recycled paper
- Use email and websites to advertise your event wherever possible.

**Sponsorship:**

- Consider seeking sponsors to support your green initiatives. Businesses may benefit from partnering with your event to help improve environmental sustainability.

A sponsoring business can demonstrate their positive corporate values to investors, customers and employees. For example, business sponsors may wish to make use of food service products for advertising their business and their support of your green event initiatives. Their cash donation, in return for the logo display, would help cover the cost of compostable food service products. It's a win-win for all involved.

**Meeting Rooms:**

- Where possible, choose rooms with natural lighting.
- Turn off projectors, overheads and lights when they are not being used.
- Plan a Carbon Neutral Conference. Visit: [www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate\\_Change](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate_Change)

**Merchandise:**

- Consider purchasing souvenir and volunteer t-shirts made of hemp or bamboo.
- Exhibitors – rather than give out paper flyers and handouts, collect email addresses and email your product information.

**This list, compiled by volunteer event organizers, is just the beginning and is designed to help your group start thinking of ways to reduce waste, reuse and plan events that further the community's efforts to be environmentally sustainable.**

**Best wishes with your green event planning!**