

Planning for a Zero Waste Conference/Event

Now more than ever the importance of planning for Zero Waste Conferences and Events is the correct action to take.

Planning a successful Conference or Event requires time commitment from many staff members across many Departments.

Custodial Services part of the Facilities Management Department would like to assist in making your Conference or Event as “**Green**” as possible, we will provide the proper containers needed for the different recycling streams that will be generated by your event, by doing so we are reducing or eliminating waste that will otherwise be land filled.

If you are planning an event or conference and require recycling/organic containers please e-mail our Customer Service Coordinator Nadia Shaver at custodial@brocku.ca two weeks prior to the start of the event with the following information:

- Date of Event
- Time and Duration of Event
- Location
- Attendance Numbers
- Serving Food and/or Beverages

Once this information is received, we can start the process to assist you in hosting a Zero Waste Conference or Event.

Should you require additional Waste reduction advice, you may contact a Custodial Supervisor at extension 3508.

For larger outdoor events, Custodial Services may access the services of Niagara Region to supply additional recycling containers (further information available at the following link: <http://www.niagararegion.ca/business/fpr/Special-Events-Recycling-Services.aspx>)

Further planning tips to a Zero Waste Conference/Event have been provided below.

What is Zero Waste?

Definition: from Zero Waste International Alliance

“Zero Waste is a goal that is both pragmatic and visionary, to guide people to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are resources for others to use. Zero Waste means designing and managing products and processes to reduce the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. Implementing Zero Waste will eliminate all discharges to land, water or air that may be a threat to planetary, human, animal or plant life”.

What can I do to plan for a Zero Waste Conference or Event?

Invitations/Pamphlets/I.D. Badges

- For informal events, use electronic invitations. E-mail guests individually, send a group email or use an electronic invitation service, such as www.evite.com.
- When sending paper invitations, select those made from post-consumer recycled paper or tree-free alternatives, such as hemp.
- Make sure your invitation is recyclable. Avoid bright-colored, dark-colored, fluorescent or metallic papers, which cannot be recycled.
- Collect all name badge holders at end of event and reuse
- Inform Guests that this is a Zero Waste event and encourage guests to car pool or use public transit
- Inform Guests at the start of the event that recycling and organic containers have been placed throughout the room for their use.

Decorations

- Avoid decorations designed for one-time use (streamers, balloons, etc.).
- Create centerpieces from fresh fruit and vegetables or potted plants.
- When using flowers, buy local, organically-grown flowers whenever possible.
- At the end of the event, encourage guests to take decorations with them.

Food & Beverage

- Plan the menu to include seasonal, organic food.
- Choose food with less packaging.
- Serve coffee and tea that is organic.
- Select organic, locally-produced wines and spirits.
- Use dishes, cups and utensils that can be washed and reused, rather than single-use food service ware.
- If you must use single-use dishes and utensils, use certified bio-compostable plates, clamshells, cups etc. which are made from corn and/or sugarcane (<http://www.bpiworld.org/BPI-Public/Approved/2.html>)
- Provide cloth napkins instead of paper.
- If you use paper napkins, make sure they're made with 100% post-consumer recycled content.
- Bulk water stations can be used instead of bottled water, reducing the use of plastics

Clean-Up

- Make sure you are prepared to compost and recycle by having the right amount of recycling/organic containers which are properly labeled.
- Pack leftover food in reusable containers. Avoid plastic wraps, plastic bags and wax-paper. Arrange in advance to donate extra food to a local food bank. Food scraps should be collected in organic containers which will be composted.
- Cardboard boxes can be broken down and placed in recycling containers.

Here is an advertisement of a Zero Waste Café in Markham



Welcome to Reflections

A Zero Waste Café

We provide:

- ✓ Biodegradable utensils and stir sticks which can be put in the green bin for composting
- ✓ Paper plates for take out and catering events which can be put in the green bin for composting
- ✓ Reusable cutlery, mugs and plates are always readily available for reuse

In partnership with Markham's Waste Management & Purchasing Department's and Merlyn's Unique Caterers.

MISSION Green

ZERO WASTE
Waste Management Department
905.415.7535

MARKHAM