

CHAPTER 20

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT AT EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

Portland metropolitan area residents love events. Tens of thousands attend massive week-long events like the County Fairs, the Bite of Oregon and the Rose Festival. Sporting events and conventions take place daily. There are home-buyers fairs, jobs fairs, and Fix-It Fairs. Farmer's Markets sprout up all over the region on a weekly basis. Businesses, neighborhoods, apartment complexes, churches, and families throw annual picnics, ice cream socials, weddings, and coming-of-age celebrations.

Big or small, these gatherings can generate a good deal of waste and consume natural resources. Community events are, however, a wonderful way to showcase shared values and demonstrate our commitment to recycling, composting and waste prevention. Fortunately, there are great reasons to create sustainability plans for these events.

Master Recyclers can play crucial roles in recovery and waste prevention efforts. Whether you are organizing a party, wedding, or family picnic or have signed up to help a community event with their recovery goals, this chapter will provide you with tools, resources, and best practices to successfully plan or participate in less waste-intensive events. This chapter begins by presenting best practices for recycling and composting at events and then explores other materials management strategies including selection of take-away containers and waste prevention strategies. It also offers an overview of how to create an event sustainability plan. The appendix contains additional resources, including sample vendor letters.



Wedding done with Something Borrowed rental equipment



Cecelia Warner and Betty Benson at the Forest Grove farmers' market



Teaching kits at the sustainability station at the world indoor sports championships

MASTER RECYCLER HOURS AT EVENTS

Please keep in mind that Master Recyclers can play many important roles in event recovery, but not all event activities related to materials may be appropriate for volunteer hours. The central mission of the Master Recycler Program is to educate. Therefore, the best use of Master Recyclers at events is to offer expertise in waste reduction best practices.

Here are roles that count as hours for Master Recyclers at events:

Volunteer Trainer : On the day of the event, learn what the event’s waste management plan is and then offer an initial training. Use the best practices in this chapter to supervise volunteers who monitor containers throughout the day and troubleshoot problems as they arise.

Vendor Outreach: Large events with multiple food carts may have a plan in place and need Master Recyclers to start the day off explaining to the food handlers how to use this system. Subsequent periodic visits to answer questions, troubleshoot unexpected problems and provide feedback are helpful.

Recovery or Sustainability Coordinator: Join the event committee as the recovery or sustainability coordinator, or work individually to strategize, organize, implement and evaluate a waste prevention and/or recovery plan at an event. It is best to first take on smaller, one-day events focusing on recycling. Larger events with more involved sustainability practices should be done when you (and the event) have had more experience.

Look in the newsletter or on the volunteer calendar in the website for announcements. Pick a project that is the right size for you. Start by joining as a trainer for volunteers and vendors. Organize and plan a small church, company or neighborhood picnic. Work your way up to implementing a plan for an existing event of 300 to 8,000 attendees.

RESOURCE

*You can tell the event coordinators they can post announcements for volunteers to do these tasks at these free web programs:
Hands on Greater Portland, CNRG-Portland and Volunteer Match.*

Some work that is necessary for a successful event recovery plan does not fit the educational requirement for Master Recycler hours. The following activities will **not** count toward Master Recycler Certification if they are the only activities you are doing:

- Standing next to recycling/composting stations to monitor containers.
- Hauling, sorting or auditing waste.
- Recruiting volunteers. (This should fall on the responsibility of the community organization.)

If you act as a lead in a project and end up doing some of these activities the time does count as hours. It just needs to be a small subset of the overall role that you play. If you are concerned or have questions about volunteer guidelines you are always welcome to check in with the Master Recycler Program Manager.

THE EVENTS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

TERM

Contamination: *Unintended materials mixing with desired materials for recycling or compost (glass is a contaminant in a paper stream); materials that are too soiled, such as with food or dirt, to be recyclable.*

The ultimate goal for any recovery plan is twofold:

1. To capture materials that are resource-rich like plastic, paper, metal, glass or food, for a market that will use them in place of virgin material.
2. To minimize the **contamination** of the materials you are trying to capture so that the end market is getting a clean load of the materials they seek.

Events are temporary by nature. An event may take place in a park, street, backyard or campus. There are special challenges to meeting these recovery goals in a temporary setting:

- **Containers.** There may be no existing garbage cans, much less recycling and compost containers. Events may be sprawling with a need for multiple locations for containers. If containers are present, they are set up for the normal use of that space. There will be a need for a larger container for pickup and a plan for someone to haul it away.
- **Event organizers.** These are busy people with multiple pressing demands on their time. They also usually don't know the best practices and resources for recycling and composting.
- **Event goers.** The attention participants will give to making decisions about which container to place waste will be less than at home or work. Containers, signage and accepted materials are also not always the same as the systems they are used to. Participants may not be local and thus unfamiliar with recycling and composting.
- **Waste.** It is challenging to predict what kinds of waste will be generated at an event. Vendors, event organizers, the set up crew, event participants, and passersby are all potential sources of material that might end up in waste containers.

These challenges don't need to be overwhelming. Successful event recovery planners will tell you that the biggest key to success is to use best practices to design a good plan and then EXPECT SURPRISES. Flexibility, the ability to think on your feet and remembering to have fun are some of the most important tools to prepare for the bumps that arise in event recovery.



RECYCLING BEST PRACTICES

Understanding best practices will equip you for any setting, even if you just show up the day of an event to train folks and troubleshoot. These best practices will also lay the groundwork for understanding how to design and implement any recovery plan, big or small.

Always use the buddy system

Provide a recycling and/or compost container everywhere where there is a garbage can. Even in the most motivated communities, it needs to be as easy to recycle or compost as it is to throw things away. Wherever you only have a garbage can in place, you can expect to find recyclables or compost tossed in the garbage. Similarly, if you only have a recycling container in place, garbage will end up in your recycling or compost container.



Simplicity

Unless there is enough volunteer power to staff every station and guide event-goers about what to do with their waste, you are going to need to rely on non-verbal communication.

- Make garbage and recycling stations highly visible, (e.g. a flag on a tall pole, balloons, signs, etc.) and in convenient locations, like areas where people buy and eat food.
- Label recycling and garbage receptacles with clear, large and simple wording and place signage at eye level.
- Images of desired materials are best.

Plan for human nature rather than trying to change it

Good, clear simple signage will increase the chance that people will look at it and follow it, but ***the main clue that people use to decide what to put into a container is the objects that are already in the container.***

You can get upset that people didn't read your sign, or you can plan for human behavior. In fact, the knowing that people toss material into a container that matches what is already there arms you with important information about how to influence those choices. Here are some ways to capitalize on that knowledge:

- Monitor recycling and compost containers frequently to remove contaminants and replace full bags. Contaminants will multiply quickly if people see them in a container. If a bag is overflowing people will start using other containers.

- Limit the number of recycling/waste stations to allow for ease of monitoring. Place larger stations in areas where high volumes of waste will be generated.
- If feasible, attach a physical sample of the acceptable material to its sign.
- Plant a few samples of the acceptable material into its proper container.
- Use clear bags for recycling so that people can see the desired material even as they are walking up to the container.
- Use black garbage bags so that people won't see recycling in there and follow suit.

Tailor the entire system around the desired materials

To be absolutely clear what you want people to put in a container it is best to use signage and containers that are designed to invite people to put that exact material in the right place. Container lids with holes the shape of a bottle or can, for instance, are ideal if that is all you are collecting in that container.

It is tempting to use a general recycling sign, but people will go with their general knowledge of what they think is recycling. At events this is a kiss of death because most of the materials vendors hand out need to go in the garbage. Most programs in the region know what is often generated at events and have made special signs. Use them. Or if you are capturing something special make a simple sign for that material.

If you are the recovery planner at an event following the best practice of tailoring the system around desired materials will mean that you will need to make a choice early on in the planning process:

1. Find out what kind of waste is generated at this event, pick desired materials to capture and design around it. OR
2. Influence what materials are generated and make a plan for that material. The planning section of this chapter will explore these two approaches in more depth.

Even if you are just a volunteer-trainer or vendor-trainer for the day, it is still very helpful to know this best practice so that you can troubleshoot. You may arrive on the scene and see that they have used general recycling signs. You can use the seed method mentioned above and work to clarify signage.



Dish collection from vendors in Forest Grove Farmers' Market

WASTE PREVENTION BEST PRACTICES

It is much easier to manage waste if it is never generated in the first place! There are plenty of easy best practices that involve reduce and reuse concepts for events. Consider these options for your events, big or small:

Centralize everything

A lot of times the reason we end up with individual packets of waste is because we are only thinking about distribution from one individual food vendor to one individual event participant.

What if the event was considered a shared venture?

Consider setting up a condiments island between the vendors. Large containers can be used to squirt ketchup and mustard directly onto the food (no more little ketchup packets!). Use urns, pitchers or punch bowls rather than canned or bottled products. Serving buffet-style avoids boxed lunches and packaging. It also reduces food waste because people can select the food they like to eat.

Use durables instead of disposables

There are many strategies for introducing durable goods at events. Linens, dishes, silverware and glasses add a sense of class to a dinner gathering of 300 people. You can borrow or rent these items for one-time events from community swap organizations or rental companies, such as That Party Store. You can incentivize behavior change by giving a raffle ticket to anyone who brings his or her own container. Vendors might be excited to hand out beer mugs or other reusable items with their company logo printed on them. You can use live plants for a table centerpiece that can be auctioned off after the event. Farmer's Markets are increasingly purchasing durable equipment for their food vendors and working with nearby businesses, schools or churches to wash and store them between market days.

BEST PRACTICES FOR FOOD

Plan to donate leftover food

More than 720,000 Oregonians use the services of food banks each year. And each year, nearly 190,000 tons of food in the Metro region, much of which is edible, are thrown away. Fresh and prepared foods are in demand by food rescue agencies. Metro's Fork-It Over program connects event organizers with food rescue agencies to reduce hunger and waste. Many farmers' markets give food scraps from the market food court to farmers' with animals.



Know when to and when not to compost

It is increasingly popular for community groups to want to start off their first sustainability plan with composting. Organics often are the largest waste material at events, and composting food scraps and coffee grounds is certainly an effective way to increase your recovery rate.

But composting is complicated and should be considered an advanced level in the world of event recovery. The compost facilities in our region will accept food only.

These conditions need to be met before it is recommended to attempt composting:

- The goal is to capture food. If it is not expected that a lot of food scraps will be generated at this event, composting should not be practiced. Beer festivals are examples of events that do not generate much food scraps, but the event organizers want to compost because they think that the cups are compostable. These cups do not provide nutrients to compost and they are not accepted in the food scrap collection in our region.
- A hauler and receiver of the food scraps is available. Some local jurisdictions support food scrap collection at events. In other areas you will need to identify a farmer who will use the food scraps for pig feed or self haul food scraps to transfer stations.
- There will be plenty of volunteers to staff waste stations and remind people to separate their food scraps from their plates and flatware.



Including composting in the plan

Consider composting food scraps (organics) from vendors only

Often the most effective food scrap collection plan is to work with the vendors only. Providing collection options during their food preparation stage will often capture more waste than the public will generate anyway.

DESIGNING AN EVENT SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

With the previously discussed best practices in your back pocket, you are now ready to explore how to approach a project from beginning to end.

Pre-planning

There is a lot to do before an event. Make sure you have enough time.

Gather information to determine what to propose

Work with the community organization to understand the reason that they want to have a sustainability plan. Are they required to have recycling in order to use the facility? Do they want to collect materials as a fundraiser? Is sustainability a core value for their community? Do they want to recover material or are they also interested in waste prevention?

You can also ask the coordinators questions to understand existing conditions. Is this the first time they have attempted to do something? Have there been failed attempts before and if so what went wrong? If they have had the event before, ask what types of waste were generated. Plastic bottles, cups and food are common recoverable materials. Metal and glass are less common. Disposable plates and silverware are virtually impossible to recover. They might even have data or a report from past events.

Clarify what resources are available for this project. Is there a green team or are you the only planner? How much time, budget and volunteers do you have?

It may also be necessary to do some research to understand the existing conditions. Contact the venue to find out what is included in the use of the space. Walk through the area to understand where the containers are now and how the space will be used during the event, so you can see if waste will be generated in the same places where there are containers. Is there a recycling or compost container buddied with every garbage can? Perhaps there are too many cans and they are really spread out. Can they be moved to create a more central waste station area?

Another way to determine what you should try to achieve is by contacting the vendors and asking them what they plan to bring and hand out to participants. You can also ask them about what waste they might generate in their own cart or work space. Do they prep food on site? Do they end up with a lot of cardboard after their boxes are emptied of literature?

Draft a proposal and meet with event planners to develop a plan

Decide on goals. What materials are you going to capture and how much? Do you want to set a goal of the percent of volume of garbage reduction or bottles captured? How will you know you were successful?

Define roles. Who in the organization will arrange, sign and manage the contract with the hauler after you make recommendations? Who do you contact to talk about volunteer needs? Who will be removing full bags of material and hauling them to larger containers for haulers (this will likely be the volunteers with your leadership)? Are you allowed to contact vendors ahead of time directly or can you include your messages with the other messages that go to them?

Secure a budget. It is crucial to be clear that you have the funding assigned to costs related to waste management. Sometimes event coordinators forget to include this in their budget planning.

Create a site map. This map can include containers and locations for larger waste containers to store before pickup. You should share this map with everyone involved. Identify places where food, boxes and other types of waste will accumulate.

Organize and execute

Arrange for pickup. If there is not already an onsite hauler, contact one to secure larger containers, work out logistics, clarify recovery goals and arrange for pickup of the garbage and/or recovered material. (You may end up having a separate plan for some or all of the recovered material.) In Portland you can look in the phone book or talk to other Master Recyclers to find haulers that give good prices and services.

Everywhere else in the region, commercial haulers are franchised and you will need to call the local jurisdiction to find out which hauler serves the area where the event is located.

You can contact the Metro Recycling Information Hotline 503-234-3000 or search on www.oregonmetro.gov for the Find a Recycler and Find a Hauler pages. From Far West Recycling to your local pig farmer, you can be creative in finding places to bring materials for recovery.



Food courts are common places for waste



Don't forget you can make money from the bottle returns

The BottleDrop Fundraiser Blue Bag program is the best option for returning bottles and cans for redemption after events because they are set up to handle large volumes. It's simple: Fill up a blue fundraiser BottleDrop bag with your Oregon redeemable bottles and cans, drop it off at your local Redemption Center, and your refund will be credited to your BottleDrop Account within 48 hours. No lines, no machines, no waiting, no problem.

Event containers, signs and other assistance

Some parts of the region have special programs to help community event organizations with material recovery. These services are not available in all parts of the region so it is important to look for the options in the location of your event. If your community is not listed below, start with your local jurisdiction's Recycling Specialist to get help with ideas for signs and containers.

Clackamas County Event Recycling Program

Provides community organizations free event recycling assistance, clearstream containers and signage for bottle and can recycling at events that take place within Clackamas County.

Contact: Colleen Johnston 503-742-4464

cjohnston@clackamas.us

City of Gresham

Provides free clearstream containers and signage for community events in Gresham.

Contact: Jennifer Ilminen, 503-618-2525

jennifer.ilminen@greshamoregon.gov

Volunteers

Ask the event coordinators to include your recovery plan needs in their volunteer recruitment and task assignments. Be sure that they provide enough volunteers for the cleanup crew. There is a lot to do at the end of the day! Also make sure they let the volunteers know if they will be doing cleanup so that they dress accordingly. Green Team t-shirts or aprons are a nice way to identify the volunteers. They can post announcements for volunteers at these free web programs: Hands on Portland, CNRG, Craig's List and volunteer match. You can search on the Internet to find them.

You can email the Master Recycler Program Manager to post an announcement to invite other Master Recyclers to help with planning, volunteer and vendor training. Remember, they cannot staff recycling/composting stations (masterrecycler@oregonmetro.gov).

Event coordinator, site supervisor and/or janitorial staff

Your venue's staff can make or break your recycling program. Make sure that all parties understand and will carry out your plans, especially if they are doing the recycling themselves. Establishing a good relationship with the event coordinator, site supervisor, and/or janitorial staff is crucial.

During the event:

1. Set up containers and signs the day before, if possible, using the best practices.
2. Check in and train vendors and volunteers.
3. Spend the day monitoring for problems, checking in with volunteers and looking for contamination or full bags.
4. Move containers, add details to signs (as needed), and use volunteers to help solve unforeseen problems.
5. Find out if you can promote recycling by making some announcements on stage.



Chatten Hayes makes recycling fun with the Festa Italiana Emcee

Post event:

1. **Tear down and clean up.** Materials continue to be generated during cleanup. Assist vendors with tear down. Complete and/or confirm final sorting and pickup of garbage and recycling. Donate food.
2. **Evaluate Your Event's Success.** Ask for feedback and suggestions from everyone involved in the event including organizers, volunteers, vendors, exhibitors and haulers.
3. **Calculate Your Event's Success.** To calculate the recovery rate, ensure ahead of time that your process will allow a clear comparison between garbage and recycling. Sometimes groups state, "We had one garbage can and three bags of recycling." This statement does not give a clear evaluation, because it is unknown how big the can was in comparison to the bags. To calculate your recycling rate you need to be able to compare recycling with the waste generated. We learned in Chapter two of this handbook that *total waste generated* is both garbage and recycling.



Mitzi Sugar counts three bags of garbage from an event with 20,000 attendees

If your hauler/recycler was able to weigh your garbage and recycling, follow up with them the day of the event for final weights.

- Calculate your recycling rate using the following formula: $\text{Recycling Rate} = \frac{\text{Weight Recycled}}{\text{Waste Generated (Weight Recycled + Weight Disposed)}}$
- For example, if an event recycled 5,000 pounds of material and disposed of 3,000 pounds of material, the total waste generated was 8,000 pounds. The recycling rate would be 62.5 percent ($5,000 / (5,000 + 3,000) = 62.5$ percent).

If your hauler was not able to weigh your garbage and recycling you will need another plan for evaluating your recovery rate.

- One option is to calculate your recycling rate using volume as your base with the following formula: $\text{Recycling Rate} = \frac{\text{Cubic Yards Recycled}}{(\text{Cubic Yards Recycled} + \text{Cubic Yards Disposed})}$

Mt Hood Community College Waste Audit 5/12/16

Photo of all Waste Generated in One Day



RESOURCE

You can use the Volume to Weight Conversion Table by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to help you estimate the weights of specific materials.

- 1 Cubic Yard = 201.974 026 US Gallons
- For example: if an event recycled three 90-gallon roll carts full of cans and bottles(90X3=270 total gallons). The hauler provided a 2 yard garbage container and it was ½ full. First convert the recycling to yards (201.974 026 / 270=.748 yards of recycling). Then calculate your recycling rate (.748 yards recycled / (.748 yards recycled + 1 cubic yard disposed) = 43 percent recycling rate.
- Because DEQ and local jurisdictions all use weight as their base for a recovery rate you might decide to convert the volume of material to weight using the resource in the sidebar to the left.

4. Publicize the recycling rate along with the results of waste prevention efforts. Thank your donors, sponsors and volunteers with a card or a post-event celebration, and share the recycling rates and waste prevention results with them.

REPORTING YOUR HOURS

All work, including emails, research, meetings, training and troubleshooting counts as Master Recycler volunteer hours so long as your primary role is training or planning. Some of these projects may be one-day events, in which case the regular Master Recycler volunteer hours report form will work well.

However, ongoing projects will make this form tedious and confusing to use. On the Report Your Hours webpage, there is a link to download an excel spreadsheet you can use to tally your activities as you go and later email to the Master Recycler Program Manager.

Please do not wait until after the event to try and calculate the hours we owe you. You will forget many of the details. If you are not sure how to count hours, contact the Master Recycler Program Manager (masterrecycler@oregonmetro.gov).



SAMPLES AND TOOLS

The next few pages are examples of tools that other Master Recyclers have used and shared from their event recovery projects.

Master Recycler Mentor Miriam Reeber's Bag'o Tricks

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spare sense of humor!!	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bungee cord	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vinyl/rubber gloves	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> notepad (pocket sized)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scissors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> twist ties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hand sanitizer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blank paper
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box Cutter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> duct tape	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> tissues or handkerchief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> notepaper
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cello tape	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bandaids	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> plastic sheet protectors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sharpies (various colors)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> binder clips (various sizes)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> antibiotic ointment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> relevant literature
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hole punch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> paper clips	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cortisone cream	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro magnets
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rubber bands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> stapler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sun screen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> camera
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> zip ties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> staple remover	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bug repellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> large plastic trash bags
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rope	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> safety pins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> water bottle	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> string		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> snack (nuts, Protein bar)	

Sample 1: Vendor Letter

[DATE]

A General Letter To Vendors

The [name of event] is counting on you to help make this year’s [event] another huge success. You can do so not only by your generous sponsorship, but also by recycling the material you generate at your booth. Events at [event site] generate a large amount of waste, and the organizing committee is committed to minimizing the amount going into landfills. We ask that you support our efforts to be an environmentally sensitive event.

Please review the waste management procedures below and complete the On-Site Needs and Plan Form. Return the form to [event coordinator] by [date].

[List any specific waste management procedures, such as materials to be recycled, vendor responsibilities, etc.]

On-Site Needs and Plan Form

Please return to [event coordinator] by [date].		
Vendor Company:		
Contact Person:		
Phone:	FAX:	Email:
Please describe any items you plan to distribute at your booth:		
Will your booth operations or items you give away generate any packaging/garbage (plastic wrappers, foil bottle caps, etc.)? Please describe so that we can be prepared:		
Please describe any needs you have on the day of the event (power, tables, chairs, etc.):		
What else do you plan to do/have at your booth? Describe anything else you plan to bring (prizewheels, inflatables, vehicles, etc.):[Name(s)] at [phone number] will be your contact for booth set-up and on-site logistical needs.		

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP in making the [event] a great event. See you on [date].

Sample 2: The Bite Of Oregon's Letter to Vendors, 2004

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES: A RECOMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

In Oregon, we care not only about what we produce but how we produce it. With a long history as a conscientious recycler, The Bite recommits itself this year to environmental sensitivity with the long-term goal of becoming the most sustainable festival in the nation.

Thanks to the generous support of Portland General Electric, The 2004 Bite of Oregon is to be powered completely by renewable energy sources: wind, hydro- and geothermal power. Thank you, PGE.

By 2008, we aim to make the festival waste-free. We begin our zero-waste campaign this year by asking you to let us know what materials you'll be bringing on site so we may better plan our waste reduction strategies for both this year and next. We'll be performing random waste sampling and weighing all types of waste. Finally, we ask that you avoid certain types of materials as much as possible.

We count on you to make this year's Bite of Oregon a huge success. You can do so not only by your participation, but also by recycling the material you generate at your booth. Events like The Bite generate huge quantities of waste, and we expect you to support our efforts to be an environmentally sensitive event.

WASTE DISPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please review the following waste disposal guidelines, complete the On-Site Needs and Plan Form, and sign below, indicating your agreement.

- The Bite relies principally on Green Team volunteer staff to remove waste from your booth. One will visit your booth occasionally to assist you in managing your waste.
- Plan to separate and contain recyclables inside or behind your booth between pick-ups:
 - Cardboard: flatten and stack
 - Cans: flatten
 - Mixed paper
 - Plastic bottles: flatten
 - Juice boxes: flatten
 - Plastic bags

MATERIALS TO BE AVOIDED

Some materials are either prohibited or strongly discouraged.

- The use of expanded polystyrene food containers (an example is clamshells) is prohibited in the city of Portland.
- Paper or plastic? Each has its environmental pros and cons and the jury is still out on this knotty question. But where you have options, choose recyclable, reusable paper materials (preferably unbleached kraft paper) over petroleum-based, non-biodegradable plastics (especially prolific and persistent, plastic film bags and plastic butter/margarine tubs).
- Avoid multi-material containers. Containers like those typically used in packaging grated cheese and frozen juices can have paper, foil, metal and plastic all in one container. These are impossible to reuse or recycle and go straight to the landfill.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

In the future, watch for these improvements in waste reduction.

- The development of biodegradable serviceware (plates, cups, utensils) proceeds apace. As these become more aesthetic, market-ready and cost-competitive, The Bite will move toward standardization of biodegradable serviceware at the festival.
- Metro is working on a food composting system that we hope to be in place by 2005, designed mainly with the restaurant industry in mind. This will permit the unsorted collection of all biodegradable waste: animal fats, unbleached paper, biodegradable serviceware, etc., without the need for sorting.

Environmental Footprint Form

Please complete the following and mail, fax or deliver the completed form to us. [Fax number]		
Name of Booth:		
Contact Person:		
Phone:	FAX:	Email:
Please list or describe the materials that you will be dispensing as part of your food, beverage, performance or promotional activities (e.g., paper plates, plastic forks, napkins, plastic glasses, glass bottles, glossy brochures, etc.):		
Approximately how many miles will you be driving to operate at the Bite?		
What type(s) of vehicles?		
How many trips?		

Example of ways to go beyond the basics

Sustainability at the BEST Awards Breakfast

The awards breakfast itself was designed to reflect the principles of the event, with strong sustainability practices infused in all aspects of planning.

The Oregon Convention Center (OCC) was selected to host the Awards breakfast based on accessibility, price, and commitment to green practices. Event planners worked with OCC and Aramark (catering) staff to ensure that most of the food was sourced locally and the remainder was organic. The event featured a host of other “green” features:

- Friends of Trees planted a commemorative native tree in honor of each BEST award winner.
- Plant Native provided native plant centerpieces.
- A school to jobs youth program that serves people of color partnered with BEST awards to have 10 youth job shadow at nominee locations and sit with them during the meal.
- Tri-Met provided free passes for all guests to encourage use of alternative transportation.
- Other sponsors provided sustainably-produced door prizes for guests.
- Guests had the opportunity to enter a drawing and offset carbon impacts with a donation to the Climate Trust.
- Doubletree Lloyd Center provided accommodations for keynote speaker Richard Heinberg. The hotel emphasizes water and energy conservation in hospitality practices.
- Event organizers and volunteers minimized automobile travel and resource use in the planning of the BEST Awards Breakfast.
- All printed materials for the event were produced on post-consumer recycled paper.