

Reducing Waste for Exhibiting & Sporting Events



EDMONTON
CONVENTION
CENTRE



SECTION 1: PRE-EVENT PLANNING

COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

- Engage vendors, exhibitors, and contractors early to integrate waste reduction strategies. Clarify expectations regarding reusable materials, rental and reusable decors, avoiding single-use items, and sorting waste properly. A vendor email can help.
- Share the venue's waste management plan, emphasizing proper waste sorting and disposal (Tip: follow waste bins signage). Include waste as a topic in planning meetings.
- Promote digital resources over printed materials to minimize paper waste. Share handouts, agendas, and event information electronically.
- Plan for leftover materials—reuse, donate, or recycle rather than discard.



Our venues donated 7,580 kg of surplus food in 2024!

GIVEAWAYS & SIGNAGE

- Use digital signage. If printing, opt for generic banners with no dates or event specific references so they can be reused.
- Print on 100% recyclable materials i.e. DIPSA (available through GES)
- Minimize packaging waste with reusable or low-packaging options. Encourage vendor participation.
- Use digital invitations, agendas instead of paper handouts. Avoid or limit printed menus and table toppers.
- Avoid promotional swag and ask your vendors to do the same. Consider alternative giveaways i.e. digital content access, experience giveaway or something that is reusable or consumable.
- Invest in reusable lanyards that can be collected and reused post-event.

FOOD & BEVERAGE WASTE REDUCTION

- Use reusable wares where possible. If unavoidable, ensure single-use items are 100% compostable and fiber-based. Vendors should label compostable and recyclable products.
- Offer disposable items (e.g., straws, stirrers, sleeves) only upon request.
- Use bulk condiment dispensers instead of single-serve packets.
- Opt for buffet-style rather than boxed or packed lunches.
- Set up water refill stations and encourage reusable bottles over disposable cups or plastic bottles.
- Partner with Edmonton Food Bank's Second Helping Program or local charities to donate surplus food

SECTION 2: EVENT OPERATIONS

MOVE-IN & MOVE-OUT

- Use designated recycling and waste bins. Ensure vendors, contractors, and staff separate recyclables like soft plastics, cardboard, and paper.
- Avoid "dump and dash." — If unsure where to place something, ask a venue representative.

WASTE SORTING & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Clearly labelled three-sorter bins are available throughout the venue. Follow signage for proper waste sorting.
- Encourage attendees to bring reusable bottles for water refill stations.

VENDOR EXPECTATION

- Require vendors to use recyclable, reusable, or compostable materials. Food and drink wares should be reusable or 100% certified compostable.
- Ask rental companies, merchandisers and vendors to use reusable packaging or minimize packaging waste.
- Ensure proper sorting of disposal materials.

MONITORING & COMPLIANCE

- Conduct waste compliance checks with vendors and contractors during setup and breakdown.
- Address any concerns preventing vendors from participating in waste reduction.

SECTION 3: POST-EVENT

LEFTOVER MATERIALS

- Plan for signage, swag, and lanyard reuse or recycling-landfill should be the last option. Inform venue representatives if assistance is needed.
- Participate in the community donation and reuse program for items like leftover books/magazines, clothing, decor, craft supplies, and office materials.
- Promote a "pack it in, pack it out" approach. Vendors must remove items that do not fit within the venue's waste diversion streams.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT & COMMUNICATION

- Evaluate waste reduction success and gather feedback for improvement.
- Recognize vendors and stakeholders who contributed to waste reduction efforts through social media and event communications.
- Consider waste reduction requirements in vendor contracts.

By working together, we can make events more sustainable, reducing environmental impact while creating meaningful experiences. Let's make a difference.

We are working to divert over 90% of event waste from the landfill, and we need your help to achieve this goal. This guide outlines how you can reduce waste at each stage in planning and delivering your event.



PAPER AND CARDBOARD
Paper, Envelopes, Newspaper, Brochures, Cardboard, Cup Cozies



ORGANIC WASTE
Food Scraps, Tea Bags, Paper Towels & Napkins, Paper Food Wrap & Containers, Eco-Product Cutlery, Eco-Product Cups



RECYCLE (EMPTY AND DRY)
Bottles, Cans, Cartons, Juice Boxes (put straws in garbage), Milk Jugs



WASTE LANDFILL WASTE
Styrofoam, Non-Compostable Coffee Cups & Lids, Plastic Bags & Wrappers