



Low-Waste Office Events Checklist

Planning a holiday, retirement, or team celebration in your office? Save money and resources by incorporating low-waste principles into your event. Use this checklist to identify opportunities for savings during event planning, promotion, purchasing, and on the big day!

Planning

Set the Stage to Avoid Waste

- Hold your meeting virtually or on a day when staff are already in the office to avoid extra commute trips.
 - If the event will be in-person, host it at your office or encourage carpooling to a centralized office.
- If you're looking to spruce up your event space with decorations, have staff bring in reusable decor from home or invest in decor that can be used for years to come.
- When creating the event agenda, add some time to tell attendees about the event's low-waste accomplishments and how to sort their waste!



Promotion

Get Creative to Get the Word Out

- Promote the event without paper flyers - Send an email or calendar invite to your colleagues or post event information on a shared digital platform.
- If you do need to print promotional flyers or handouts:
 - Print materials on reused paper (e.g., print-outs with non-confidential information and one clean side) or 50-100% post-consumer recycled-content paper.
 - Print double-sided or multiple flyers on a page.
 - Bonus: Paper is Green Seal Certified or FSC Certified "Recycled" or "Mix".
 - Recycle the flyers after the event.
 - For reoccurring events, design key media to be reusable with no date-specific content. Laminate or post the flyer in a sheet protector to keep it looking nice!

Purchasing and Preparing Food

Provide Refreshments that are Delicious, Healthy, and Locally-Sourced

- Request RSVPs to provide an accurate amount of food.
- At least one main dish is a vegetarian option.
- Catering is provided by a certified Green Business.
- At least 30% of the total cost of food/beverages are produced locally within 200 miles, fair-trade certified, and/or organic.
- Make plans before the event to donate leftover food.



Serving Food in Style

Start Small to Set Your Office Up for a Low-Waste Event Future

- Reusables are key!
 - Serve food from reusable dishes and provide beverages in reusable pitchers or large dispensers.
 - Provide reusable plates, bowls, cups, and/or utensils, and encourage attendees to bring their own.
 - Start with using reusables in a few key areas and work up to a completely reusable event!
- Serve food buffet-style, rather than individually wrapped, and purchase or prepare food that doesn't require utensils.
- Serve condiments in bulk rather than single-serving packages.
- If you do need to purchase some single-use items:
 - Ensure single-use items can be recycled or composted.
 - No Styrofoam.
 - Focus on paper-based food serviceware that can be composted.
 - Ensure paper-based food serviceware is uncoated (not plastic-lined).
 - Use minimum 40% post-consumer recycled content for paper-based food serviceware and napkins.
 - No plastic, including "compostable" plastic.
 - Bonus: Paper-based food serviceware is unbleached or labeled Processed Chlorine Free (PCF).
 - Look for items with the following certifications:



BPI



Green Seal



**Compost
Manufacturing
Alliance**



**FSC Certified
"Recycled"**



GreenScreen



UL Ecologo



**Vincotte
OK Compost**

Simplify Sorting

Ensure Items End Up in the Correct Bin

- Provide compost and recycling bins in a convenient location.
- Label waste receptacles with pictures or descriptions of what items go into each bin.
- Have bin monitors help event attendees sort waste into the proper receptacles.



For more information, contact your department's G3 Champions: