

# ZERO WASTE GUIDE

## FOR EVENT PLANNERS



RETHINK

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

RESIDUAL

**ZERO**  
**WASTE**  
**STARTS NOW**  
zerowasteyukon.ca

## WHAT IS ZERO WASTE?

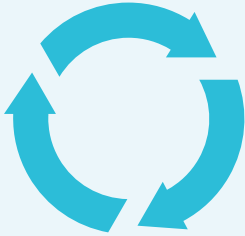
Zero Waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use. Zero Waste means designing and managing products and processes to reduce the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. *-Zero Waste International Alliance*

## ZERO WASTE:

### AN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

Zero Waste is an international movement of committed people and best practices for creating positive change, waste reduction, economic development opportunities and resilience by working towards the elimination of waste in all areas of our individual and collective lives. Getting to Zero Waste is a process that involves individuals, communities, businesses, and local, provincial/territorial and federal governments.

## WHY IS ZERO WASTE IMPORTANT?



- Eliminates inefficiencies that can save you money
- Helps to preserve the environment and its resources for future generations
- It reduces the need for landfills and other disposal options

According to the 2014 City of Whitehorse Solid Waste Action Plan, the total waste generated (including recycling, organics and landfilled waste) in Whitehorse has increased 88% since 2000. This is partly due to population increases (18%), but even factoring that in, Whitehorse citizens are producing 37% more waste per person than they did in 2000. As a community, the more waste we produce, the more pressure (cost) on the overall waste management system.

## WHAT IS A ZERO WASTE EVENT?

A Zero Waste event is one that is planned and organized to avoid generating any waste that will be sent to landfill. A Zero Waste event is also one that minimizes the amount of one-time-use items that are required to run the event. For example, bottled water and paper cups are recyclable, but refillable bottles or glassware are the best choice!

Advance planning is key in making waste reduction efforts successful for your event. Taking steps to limit waste in the first place will go a long way towards reducing overall event costs, litter, and the negative impacts that waste has on our environment. Several Yukon event and festival planners have taken the steps to make their events Zero Waste. Their wealth of experience is contained in this guide, making it very easy to take the next steps for your event.

**If you are organizing a large or small event, this guide will show you how to minimize waste and maximize reuse, composting and recycling.**



## AN EVENT PLANNER'S ZERO WASTE GUIDE

**Rethink** your purchasing and consumption. **Ask yourself:** Do I need this? Is there a less wasteful option?

**Reduce** the amount of materials that require purchasing, hence reducing the quantity of waste produced by your event. Imagine making a choice about what your participants will drink out of. **Ask yourself:** With this choice, can waste be further reduced?

**Reuse** as much as possible. Consider reusable items such as glasses, mugs, cutlery, plates, and signage from year to year. **Ask yourself:** With this choice, are reusable items an option?

**Recycle** all one-time-use materials in Yukon. Choose these materials carefully. **Ask yourself:** With this choice, can these items be recycled?

**Residual** left overs that cannot be reused or recycled must be disposed of, ensure they are properly disposed of at the landfill. **Ask yourself:** How much will go to landfill? Can this be avoided?

## WHY HOLD A ZERO WASTE EVENT?

Achieving a successful waste management system at your event can provide a range of benefits:

### Save money!

Reduce overall costs for waste management. The more waste you reduce, the more money you save!

### Reduce. Reduce. Reduce.

Remember, if you don't buy it in the first place you won't have to dispose of it later, which reduces the impact of your event on the environment.

### Walk, cycle, bus, carpool to reduce emissions.

Choose an accessible location and encourage alternative transportation to reduce emissions.

### Attract attention!

Provide more marketing and promotional opportunities for your event. Achieve recognition for being a Zero Waste event and supporting sustainable waste practices.

### Engage and impress your patrons.

Encourage your patrons to meet the challenge with a fun contest. At the same time you will be creating an environmental feel good factor.

## ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY

### CONSERVATION KLONDIKE SOCIETY

The Conservation Klondike Society in Dawson City provides recycling services for the municipality and also manages waste stations at many events. They also offer community dishes on loan for use at events. This is a great service to promote reuse at public events and cut down on waste from disposable dishware!

Visit

[www.conservationklondike.com](http://www.conservationklondike.com)  
for more information.



# HOW TO PLAN A ZERO WASTE EVENT

Planning a Zero Waste event is easy. The key is to plan ahead and keep it simple. The following are a few tips and suggestions for creating a Zero Waste event.

## BEFORE THE EVENT

### CHOOSE A VENUE

When choosing a venue find a location that allows for convenient use of alternative transportation like walking, cycling, carpooling or bus. Also look for venues that offer a comprehensive recycling program to simplify some of the planning.

### COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

Having an event that diverts waste from landfills is something you will be proud of. It helps attract both patrons and sponsors, so it is worth telling the world!

- **Press release:** Issue a press release and advertise your Zero Waste goal.
- **Endorsement:** Speak with elected officials and municipal employees to see what support is available.
- **Website:** Use online registration to reduce paper. Use the website and social media to advertise your Zero Waste goal.
- **Promotional items:** Free giveaways should be sustainable and locally sourced if possible – look to promote services and consumables rather than products (gym/movie passes, local farm products etc.).
- **Marketing Materials:** Make attempts to reduce the amount of material used when advertising, printing brochures, pamphlets, schedules, program highlights or tickets. If printing is necessary, try to use 100% post-consumer recycled paper.
- **Word of mouth:** It's still a powerful tool, and don't forget the value of volunteer support.



# ENGAGE VENDORS

When booking vendors let them know right away that you are planning a Zero Waste event and what this means to them. Make sure that you:

- Specify in vendor contracts that they may only sell or use products that are recyclable, compostable or reusable. No styrofoam or disposable plastic bags!
- Provide a list of products acceptable for use at the event with the product supplier contact details.
- Consider providing a separate list of materials that are not acceptable and should not be brought into the event.
- Give vendors as much lead-time as possible.
- Visit the events page at [www.zerowasteyukon.ca](http://www.zerowasteyukon.ca) for a printable guide you can provide to your vendors on how to be waste-free.
- Note: biodegradable does not mean a product is compostable at Whitehorse's compost facility. Look for this logo:



## ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY

### FROG FOOD AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

In 2014 the Frog Food & Music Festival decided to work towards Zero Waste at their event. They worked diligently with both vendors and attendees to focus on reusable or compostable items whenever possible. They provided dishwashing, composting and recycling stations throughout the grounds and worked hard to educate attendees on the importance of Zero Waste.

Up-front planning was critical to their successes and they are looking forward to even more waste diversion in the future.



## SMART PURCHASING

Your focus should be on reducing the amount of material brought to the event site. This is a key component of minimizing waste during the event. Purchasing over-packaged material goods leads to unnecessary waste production. In turn, the waste generated pollutes our soils, air and waters and increases our greenhouse gas emissions.

- Purchase from local suppliers. **This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, supports local business and limits waste.**
- Check out green supply stores or contact the municipality for assistance in ordering these supplies.
- Avoid non-recyclable goods. If you have a choice, choose the product that can be composted or recycled (product as well as packaging).
- Use decorations and props that are made of reused or recycled material and can be reused or recycled after the event. Avoid using balloons if possible.
- Sell food and beverages at the event only in serving ware and packaging that can be reused, recycled or composted. Most paper and raw wood food ware are compostable.
- Purchase in bulk. Avoid individual packages for condiments, drinks etc.
- Use reusable containers and serving ware. For example, urns, pitchers, large bowls.
- Take some time to research what is recyclable in Yukon.

## ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY

### YUKON GEOSCIENCE FORUM & TRADESHOW

In 2014 The Yukon Geoscience Forum & Trade Show made the bold decision to work towards a Zero Waste event. They invested in significant up front planning, looking at all aspects of the event from a zero waste perspective, and developed a strong volunteer committee. As a national event held in a moderately remote location, this was a bold goal. The 4 day conference and trade show saw over 400 delegates and 600 participants at the Yukon Convention Centre. Through active engagement of vendors and the resource recovery team, they achieved 96% waste diversion!

- 47% recyclable plastic
- 16% refundable beverage containers
- 17.25% recyclable paper & cardboard
- 16.5% compost
- 3.25% garbage



## EDUCATE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The more information you share with your staff and green team volunteers, the more success you will see. You must focus on educating staff and volunteers about the importance of recycling and proper recycling procedures. Make sure each volunteer knows which materials will be recycled. These individuals will be able to direct event attendees to recycling and compost stations.

Now that your staff and green team volunteers are educated you need to create a schedule for event day. Make sure that each person is assigned a duty that will assist in the success of Zero waste efforts.

If you don't know where to start looking for volunteers, contact Volunteer Yukon for support, [www.volunteeryukon.ca](http://www.volunteeryukon.ca).

## WASTE MANAGEMENT SITE PLAN

Don't forget to include waste management in your site plan! When determining locations, try to ensure that your visitors don't have to search for bins. The more effort visitors have to go through to find your disposal bins, the less they will be willing to follow the disposal instructions.

- Determine how you will track and measure diversion prior to the event and educate staff and volunteers on this.
- Identify the location of food and beverage vendors and services that will require recyclable, compostable,

or waste collection. Ensure proper receptacles are available inside and outside those areas.

- Bins should also be placed in food preparation areas, washrooms, event entry points and other high traffic areas (i.e. stage, sports field, courtyard etc...). Above all, bins should be accessible and conveniently located.
- Calculate the number and type of bins required. Make arrangements to ensure they are at the site and placed in the most effective locations, with adequate signage.

## EVENT AND BIN SIGNAGE

This is so important to get right! Your signage must:

- Inform your patron of what a Zero Waste event is.
- Clarify which materials can be recycled and where to put them.
- Be easy to read and inform visitors of recycling procedures.
- Utilize photos or images and keep the message simple so that attendees

of all ages and backgrounds can understand.

- Be reusable or rewritable wherever possible to increase flexibility and decrease waste.
- Educate patrons about what products are recyclable or compostable.
- Be placed at eye-level where possible and on all accessible sides of the bins.
- Be weatherproof, lightweight and portable.



## DURING THE EVENT

### MONITOR VENDORS ✓

Connect with your vendors upon arrival to ensure they have met their obligations and are aware of how the bins work and where they are located. Check back with vendors throughout the event to ensure they are following the Zero Waste guidelines and to answer any questions.

### LABEL YOUR BINS ✓

Ensure that recycling bins are well marked to make it easy for people to understand what goes where.

- **Colour Coordinate:** Use different colours for each waste type.
- **Clear Wording:** Make them easy to read.
- **Placement:** Ensure they are positioned where people can see them easily.

### CLEARLY LABELED BINS



- **Photos and Images:** Pictures of what you want to go in the bins is very effective.
- **Reusable:** Make them reusable and use them for your next event!

### MONITOR BINS ✓

Designate and schedule your green team. Ensure that they are clearly identifiable to your patrons. Your green team will monitor the recycling stations and provide clarity to people with questions. They will also be key in helping reduce contamination and increase the amount of waste that is recycled overall. Empty, sort and measure as required throughout the event to ensure that it isn't overwhelming at the end of the event.

### ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY ✓

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In June of 2017, Zero Waste Yukon partnered with Winterlong Brewery and North Star Mini Storage to host the first ever Reuse and Repair Fair. The event showcased local reuse artisans and provided free repair and Zero Waste workshops to the public. This event not only highlighted local reuse and repair opportunities, but also celebrated local champions of Zero Waste while also stimulating discussion about local issues surrounding reuse and waste reduction.



## RESTRICT USE OF CONVENTIONAL DISPOSAL BINS

Remove or tape shut any existing garbage receptacles and have signs explaining where the recycling stations are located. This will help with recyclable items being dumped in the garbage and increases your success of a Zero Waste event.

## ENGAGE WITH GUESTS

Let your visitors have fun with making a difference!

- Encourage patrons to bring reusable coffee/tea mugs and water bottles. Although plastic water bottles are recyclable, the bottling, packaging and shipping of billions of litres of bottled water leaves a large environmental burden worldwide.
- Encourage guests to walk, cycle, carpool or bus to your event.
- Have fun! Create a buzz before the event with a simple contest.
- Effective signage will encourage proper separation of the waste streams.
- Post clear and easy-to-read signs to educate visitors about proper disposal habits.
- Announce throughout the event that this is a zero waste event and how they can participate.
- Have members of your green team engage with guests at the recycling stations to help explain Zero Waste and what to do with their items

Composting organic waste represents a significant opportunity to reduce waste going into the Yukon landfills.

The City of Whitehorse Solid Waste Action Plan identified that 17% of what goes into the landfill currently can be diverted as compost, which would create a valuable resource and decrease air and water pollution in the landfill.

Currently the City of Whitehorse diverts 31% of waste through reuse, recycling and composting. This is a 46% increase since 2012!

If organics, cardboard, wood, recyclables, metals, household hazardous waste and e-waste were all removed from the waste stream, we would see about 70% less thrown away and would easily reach our initial goal of 50% diversion!

## AFTER THE EVENT

### MONITOR BINS DURING CLEANUP

It's easy to lose heart after a long event day. Ensure your green team volunteers are still monitoring your bins when patrons are leaving and vendors are tearing down. This will ensure the efforts made throughout the event are not lost during tear down.

- Have a plan for when and how the full bins will be dealt with after the event.
- Do a final empty, sort and measure to determine how much waste you have diverted to the landfill.
- Take photos!

### DONATE UNUSED ITEMS

Donate what you can back to your community.

- Excess food to the local food bank.
- Unused materials to community organizations (e.g. schools, service clubs, youth programs, etc.)

## ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY

### LAKE LABERGE LIONS TRADESHOW

The Lake Laberge Lions Trade Show successfully diverted over 80% of their waste in their first year of working towards being a Zero Waste event. With 8000 people at the event over 2 days, this represented the following:



- 19 bags of garbage
- 24 bags of compost
- 49 bags of recyclable plastic
- 1 bag of recyclable paper
- 3 large trolleys of recyclable cardboard

We can't wait to see what they can do in future years as they continue to refine their processes.

## COLLECT YOUR DATA

It is important to collect a few numbers in order to celebrate your success. Designate green team volunteers to collect the following data:

- Number of patrons at the event.
- Amount of recyclables (glass, plastic, aluminum, cardboard, other).
- Amount of compostable material sent to a composting facility.
- Amount of waste sent to landfill.

## REPORT ON YOUR SUCCESS

Sponsors, vendors, patrons and the public will be interested in the success of the event—let them know how much waste was diverted from the landfill. This will help secure support for future events.

## RECOGNIZE VENDORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Don't forget to publicly thank your amazing team of staff, contractors, vendors, and volunteers for all working together to create a successful Zero Waste event.



# Event Checklist

## Prior to event

- Identify service providers for garbage, recycling and compost
- Identify zero waste goals
- Determine purchasing plan
- Research local procurement opportunities
- Identify education and outreach opportunities
- Purchase recycled, recyclable or compostable products
- Require vendors to purchase recycled, recyclable and compostable items
- Meet with vendors and contractors to discuss recycling and waste reduction opportunities
- Source local food
- Select and order equipment (bins, stickers, etc.)
- Research donation opportunities
- Identify staff person to assist in implementing recycling procedures
- Organize education and outreach components (i.e. information in event program and vendor packets, press release, signage, etc.)

## Two months prior to event

- Publicize your zero waste event through displays, media, and promotions
- Inform media of zero waste program
- Order recycling/waste services and stations
- Determine who will be collecting and transporting recyclables on the event day
- Include recycling procedures in vendor packet
- Train staff and volunteers on recycling procedures
- Develop a site plan to determine the placement and number of bins needed

## Week prior to event

- Confirm donation pick-up
- Confirm hauler/recycler schedule
- Create signage for recycling bins, if not provided by service provider

# ▶ Event Checklist

## Day before event

- Train staff and volunteers (can be done day of event)
- Distribute recycling procedures to vendors
- Strategically place trash and recycling bins as per site plan

## Day of event

- Monitor waste and recycling stations regularly
- Empty containers as needed
- Publicize recycling throughout day with announcements

## Post event

- Ensure containers are picked up on time
- Collect weight tickets and receipts from haulers
- Complete a post-event report
  - Review what procedures did and did not work
  - Evaluate results
- Write-up recommendations for your next event
- Publicize your results
- Work with local non-profits who will take your donations

## ZERO WASTE SUCCESS STORY

### FIREWEED COMMUNITY MARKET HOSTS A REUSE AND REPAIR FAIR

Building on the success of the first Reuse and Repair Fair, Zero Waste Yukon partnered with the Fireweed Community Market Society to host a second event at the market in August of 2017. Regular market activities were joined by reuse artisans, local artist workshops with recycled materials, and repair workshops with YuKonstruct and Icycle Sports. A waste audit was also held to investigate the market waste stream and provide guidance for moving the market toward Zero Waste!



# ▶ Local Resources

## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Compostable dishware, containers, etc.

Yukon Service Supply Co.  
www.yukonservicesupply.ca  
867-668-4242

G-P Distributing Inc.  
www.g-pdistributing.com  
867-667-4500

Event planning, catering supplies, reusable dishes, tents

Marsh Lake Tents and Events  
www.tentsevents.com  
867-633-4500

Printing services

Staples Print & Marketing  
www.staplescopyandprint.ca  
867-633-2550

## ZERO WASTE EVENT TOOLS RENTAL

To support event planners taking the next step towards zero waste, Zero Waste Yukon rents a cube van complete with waste stations and supplies for your Zero Waste event!

Contact Zero Waste Yukon at 667-7269 or [info@zerowasteyukon.ca](mailto:info@zerowasteyukon.ca)

## RECYCLING PROVIDERS IN WHITEHORSE

Raven Recycling  
110 Galena Rd  
www.ravenrecycling.org  
867-667-7269

P&M Recycling  
607 Ray St  
867-667-4338

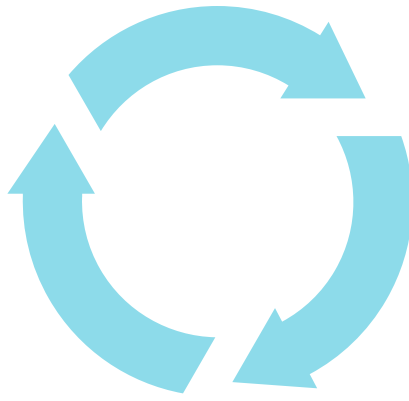
Whitehorse Waste Management Facility  
91972 Alaska Hwy  
867-668-1621  
\*Tipping fees waived for recyclables



Looking for more local resources?

Visit

[www.zerowasteyukon.ca](http://www.zerowasteyukon.ca)



ZERO WASTE



Zero Waste Yukon is made up of a passionate group of stakeholders and partners that have come together to help make Zero Waste in the Yukon a reality.

## EMAIL US

[info@zerowasteyukon.ca](mailto:info@zerowasteyukon.ca)

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.zerowasteyukon.ca](http://www.zerowasteyukon.ca)

We greatly appreciate the support of the Sunshine Coast and Powell River Regional Districts and the Let's Talk Trash team in allowing us to utilize their content as a framework to create this document.

**ZERO  
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