

DETAILED RECOMMENDED WASTE STATION STREAMS

Waste Stream	Available For	Details
Bottles & Cans	Attendees, Vendors	For beverage containers only. Partner with a local non-profit to collect high-value refundable beverage containers. Visit return-it.ca/beverage/products for list of accepted items.
Cups	Attendees, Vendors	Use only one type of cup (compostable or recyclable). Avoid offering a 'Mixed Containers' stream.
Food Scraps & Organics	Attendees, Vendors, Event Operations	Provide organics bins if food is served or allowed. Accept only compostable foodware like plates, napkins, and fiberware. No compostable plastics.
Paper & Cardboard	Vendors, Event Operations	Recycle clean paper and cardboard from event packaging. Break down boxes to save space. Visit recyclebc.ca/what-can-i-recycle for list of accepted items.
Flexible Plastics	Vendors, Event Operations	Separate flexible plastics like shrink wrap, bags, and overwrap. Check with your waste hauler for acceptance. Visit recyclebc.ca/what-can-i-recycle/flexible-plastics for list of accepted items.
Liquids Bucket	Attendees	Place a monitored liquids bucket at each waste station and empty it regularly to prevent contamination of other waste streams.
Garbage to Landfill	Attendees, Vendors, Event Operations	Use for items that cannot be recycled or composted.

The SLRD envisions a future where resources are sourced and used locally, with the ultimate objective of achieving Zero Waste, as recognized in the 2016 SLRD Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan.

? **Questions?**
Contact your local government for more information.

Sustainable Events:
Waste Guide

HOW TO REDUCE AND MANAGE WASTE AT EVENTS ACROSS THE SQUAMISH-LILLOOET REGIONAL DISTRICT (SLRD).



INTRODUCTION

USING THIS GUIDE

Congrats, you’ve decided to host a sustainable event! Now what?

The following guide will highlight the main things to think about when planning a waste-conscious event:

- Before the event

Anticipate the types of waste your event will generate and take proactive steps to prevent or reduce them through thoughtful planning and vendor engagement.
- During the event

Support proper sorting by setting up clear signage, staffed waste stations, and providing the right tools for attendees and vendors to separate waste correctly.
- After the event

Conduct a final waste audit to determine your diversion rate. Celebrate wins, share lessons learned, and use your insights to improve future events.

Read on for ideas and useful resources to use as you are in the planning, execution, and reflection stages of your event.

BEFORE THE EVENT

HOW TO: DEVELOP A WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. Calculate Expected Waste:

Categorize the expected waste and its quantities; e.g. organics, paper, recyclable plastic cups, etc. Consider the waste generated at each phase of the event and identify opportunities to minimize it.
2. Set a Goal:

Set a challenging but realistic waste reduction and diversion goal. Ensure goals are specific and measurable. Example: Kilograms of waste diverted or number of bags collected.
3. Plan Your Waste Stations:

 - Review your site map to determine how many waste stations are needed.
 - Prioritize centralized, high-traffic locations where waste is most likely generated (e.g. food areas, entrances, washrooms, and exits).
 - Each station should have a minimum of three streams: organics, recyclables, and waste to landfill. See “Recommended Waste Streams” for more details.



Q. What is a Waste Station?
A. A designated area at an event where attendees can sort and dispose of their waste into clearly labelled bins for different streams.

TIP: Always group waste receptacles together. A bin placed alone is likely to become a catch-all for all types of waste.

BEFORE THE EVENT

Q. What is Waste Storage?
A. A secure holding area where collected waste bags from event stations are stored before final removal by a hauler or transport to a waste facility.

4. Plan Waste Storage:
- When planning, consider the following:
- Venue Capabilities:** Does the venue have a designated waste storage area, or will you need to set one up?
 - Hauling Logistics:** Will you hire a waste hauler or transport waste to a waste facility? Determine the collection frequency for each stream based on expected volumes. If self-hauling, check facility requirements.
 - Bag Management:** Plan how often bags will be changed at waste stations and how full bags will be moved to storage.
 - Wildlife:** Ensure waste is stored securely in a wildlife resistant container/enclosure and removed frequently enough to prevent odours, attracting pests, or wildlife.

5. Train Your Team:
- Train waste station hosts to efficiently guide guests to sort waste and maintain stations. Refer to the “Waste Station Host - Quick Start Guide” of this document.

TIP: Consider hiring a dedicated “Green Team” to champion waste reduction during your event. They can assist attendees, monitor waste stations, and keep waste efforts on track and visible.


6. Signage:
- Use clear signage to communicate which items go in each waste streams. Customize the signs to reflect the specific items that will be used at your event.

TIP: Wording such as “We’re On A Journey to Reduce Our Waste!”, “Waste Stations Ahead”, “Help Us Keep It Clean” to direct attendees to the stations.


Visit the slrd.bc.ca/signage for FREE educational signage, available for download and print.

RECOMMENDED WASTE STATION STREAMS


Bottles & Cans




Waste to Landfill




Cups




Flexible Plastics




Organics



Liquids Bucket



Paper & Cardboard



TIP: Check with you local waste hauler about what items are accepted

BEFORE THE EVENT

PROCUREMENT, PERMITS & COMMUNICATIONS

1. Mindful Procurement:

Purchase only what you need, and prioritize reusable options. Whenever possible, rent items such as dishware, decorations, and props instead of buying new. Condiments can be offered in bulk, and request minimal packaging from suppliers.

2. Engage Partners:

Waste reduction is a collaborative effort. Identify key partners and communicate your goals. These may include the event coordinator, volunteer manager, vendors and caterers, exhibitors, sponsors, and venue staff.

3. Communicate with Vendors:

Specify that your event is waste-conscious. Outline expectations early, provide practical guidance, and share helpful resources (see sample email).

SAMPLE VENDOR EMAIL

Subject: Help Us Keep [EVENT NAME] Low Waste!

Dear [Vendor Name],

We're excited to welcome you to [EVENT NAME]! As part of our commitment to sustainability, we ask for your support in keeping waste to a minimum. Here's how you can help:

- **Use reusable, recyclable, or uncoated fiber compostable service ware.** Avoid compostable plastics.
- **Keep giveaways low-waste.** Skip balloons or swag, and choose reusable or experience-based items.
- **Sort your waste** at your booth or use the hosted Waste Stations, open from [insert hours].
- **Waste must be in clear bags** and never left unattended as this attracts wildlife and may lead to fines.
- **Use recyclable or reusable materials** for your booth setup and printed materials.

Thanks for supporting a cleaner, greener [EVENT NAME]! Questions? Reach us at [event contact details].

SAMPLE SOCIALS POST



Know before you go:

- Sort your waste!** Separate your recyclables, organics and waste to landfill - if you don't know where something goes, ask us!
- Bring reusables!** Reduce single-use waste by bringing reusable water bottles and containers.
- Leave no trace!** Help protect our local wildlife by ensuring you leave nothing behind.

“ We're excited to share our commitment to sustainability at [Event Name]! Here's what to know before you go! Together, we can make [Event Name] a low-waste event!

TIP: Share the following resources:

- [BC's Alternatives to Single-use Plastics](#)
- [Buyer's Guide to Single-Use Items for guidance.](#)



4. Share Your Success!

Be proud of your sustainability efforts. Use promotions and social media to showcase your initiatives and let attendees know what to expect on event day (See sample socials post.)

BEFORE THE EVENT

5. Obtain Permits:

Require a Special Events Permit? Ensure compliance with applicable regulations.



6. Planning on Hiring a Contractor for Construction and Dismantling of Props?

Partner with set design companies that specialize in responsible disposal and recycling.

Considerations for Constructed Props:

- Plan to dismantle, reuse, or donate materials when possible.
- Check with your disposal facility to identify appropriate waste streams for materials like wood, metal, drywall, concrete, and landfill.
- Set up separate bins or areas for sorting materials to prevent contamination.

DURING THE EVENT

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

1. Waste Stations:

Set up your waste stations, including signage, as per your waste management plan.

Remember:

Waste stations should include at least three streams: organics, recyclables & landfill.

Tip: Ensure your waste stations are available during the event set-up phase to capture the waste from the production team.

2. Communicate Waste Disposal Plan:

Ensure all staff are informed of the waste collection process and designated secure storage areas for full bags. Keep these areas clean and contained to prevent wildlife attraction.

REMINDER: Do not leave waste unattended, waste stored outdoors **must be stored in a wildlife resistant container.**



EVENT ENGAGEMENT

3. Vendor Communication:

Inform vendors about waste sorting expectations, disposal times, and station locations. Encourage them to direct customers to waste stations.

REMINDER! Prevent vendors from placing bins out for customers. These often become catch-all bins and can undermine your waste diversion efforts.

4. Ongoing Promotion:

Continue to promote proper waste disposal via announcements, social media, and vendor engagement throughout the event.

TRACK WASTE

5. Track Waste:

- Monitor and track the amount of waste diverted from landfills during the event.
- Weigh full bags of waste at key intervals (e.g., at the end of each day).
- Record the weight and categorize it by waste type (organics, recycling, landfill).

WASTE STATION HOST - QUICK START GUIDE

Waste station hosts will guide event attendees in sorting waste into the correct bins and ensure proper disposal to support the event’s waste diversion goals. They will also educate guests on waste reduction and maintain the cleanliness of the waste stations.

Equipment Requirements for Station Hosts:

- Bins and bags for each waste stream
 - Tongs for removing contaminants and picking up litter
 - Liquids bucket for emptying containers before disposal
- Hand sanitizer
 - Reusable rubber gloves
 - Bear spray

Hosting the Station:

Set Up and Sort:

- Ensure each station has bins for each waste stream outlined in the event’s waste management plan.

Engage and Educate:

- Greet attendees, guide them to the right bins, and explain sorting when needed.

Waste Sorting Tips for Required Waste Streams:

- Organics: Organic waste (e.g., food scraps, napkins, fibre-based containers)
- Recycling: Dependent on the streams collected at the event (e.g. bottles and cans: soda cans and juice boxes)
- Garbage: Non-recyclable, dirty recyclables, and non-compostable items.

Refer to “Recommended Waste Station Streams” for further information on additional waste streams.

Maintain Cleanliness:

- Regularly check bins and replace full bags.
- Keep waste stations tidy, and remove any overflow and contaminants.

Monitor and Record:

- Weigh and record full bags of waste to calculate landfill diversion rate.



AFTER THE EVENT

TEAR DOWN

A sustainable event doesn’t end when the last guest leaves. Responsible tear down and post-event actions are just as important as setup. Here's how to finish strong:

1. Dismantle and Separate Sets:

- Separate all materials from displays, sets, and staging as planned.
- Assign trained staff to oversee sorting and disposal.

2. Waste Collection:

- Collect any remaining event waste (organics, recyclables, and garbage).
- Ensure all bins are emptied, properly sorted, and responsibly disposed of.
- Ensure no waste is left unattended until collected by waste hauler.



MEASURE SUCCESS

3. Weigh Your Tear-Down Waste:


Conduct a final waste audit in order to determine how much waste was collected, diverted from landfill, and in which streams.

Landfill Diversion Formula

Use this formula to calculate the total % of waste diverted from landfill.



Recycling + organics



Total waste collected (landfill waste, organics, recycling)

x 100

4. Recognition:

Get digital recognition for your waste management efforts through a Zero Waste Certification.

TIP: Explore certification programs such as [Zero Waste Canada’s Zero Waste Event Certification](#)

SHARE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

5. Communicate:

Share your accomplishments with attendees, partners, and sponsors. Even if you didn’t meet your goals, you can still share your waste reduction efforts and use the lessons learned moving forward!

TIP: Add a “Sustainability Snapshot” to your post-event report or social media post. Share your diversion rate, key actions taken, and lessons learned. Transparency builds trust and sets the bar for future events!

6. Thank Partners, Vendors and Attendees:

Thank everyone that contributed to your event’s sustainability. Recognize their contributions and celebrate your achievements.

7. Reflect:

Take the time to reflect on your goals.

- Did you reach them?
- What worked and what didn’t?
- Update your waste reduction policies and use learnings to improve future events.

HOW TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE EVENT

WATER REFILL STATION

Encourage attendees to bring their own bottles.



REUSABLE FOOD SERVICEWARE

Consider hiring a reusable foodware and cup service provider.



WASTE STATION

Ensure waste stations have trained staff to help attendees sort waste.



PACKAGING AND SWAG

Avoid unnecessary packaging and swag; choose consumables or experiences instead.



DECORATIONS

Rent decorations and event supplies to reduce single-use items



WASTE STORAGE

Consider waste storage space and availability, hauling logistics, wildlife resistance, and plan for proper disposal/reuse of props.



BIKE VALET

Choose a location that is accessible via public transport and provide bike valet.



1

MAKE A WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

What kind of waste and what quantities do you expect?

2

REDUCE WASTE

Engage with your partners and vendors to reduce waste. Use reusable resources whenever possible.

3

SET UP WASTE STATIONS

Set up hosted waste stations to separate waste into organics, recyclables, and waste to landfill.

4

WRAP UP RESPONSIBLY

Ensure waste is sorted and disposed of properly.