

Community Event Recycling Guide



York County Solid Waste Authority

Why is it important to have a recycling plan for community events?

Community events bring people together from many areas, most of which have some form of recycling available to their residents. In York County, 99% of residents have access to curbside and/or drop-off recycling. People expect to recycle at home, at work and also in the public environment. When recycling services are made available in a clear, consistent and convenient manner, most people will take advantage of them. Recycling saves valuable natural resources and is required by law in many York County communities through Pennsylvania Act 101, municipal ordinance or both.



COMMUNITY RECYCLING BENEFITS

- MEETS ATTENDEES' EXPECTATIONS
- SAVES NATURAL RESOURCES
- COMPLIES WITH STATE AND MUNICIPAL LAWS

What can a municipality do to encourage successful community event recycling?

REGISTRATION AND EDUCATION

PROVIDE YOUR EVENT APPLICANT WITH YOUR MUNICIPALITY'S RECYCLING EXPECTATIONS such as a list of materials which are mandatory to recycle. Include this brochure which provides helpful advice on how to plan for recycling at community events.

REQUIRE RECYCLING PLANS WITH EVENT REGISTRATION. Recycling can only be successful if it is planned for. In the recycling plan portion of your event registration, require that your applicant identify who will provide recycling and waste bins, what types of recycling and waste materials are expected to be generated and who will gather and haul recyclables after the event.

What are the recycling planning steps community event organizers should follow?

COMMUNITY EVENT RECYCLING PLAN STEPS

- 1. SECURE A HAULER OR MARKET FOR RECYCLABLES.** Will you hire a professional hauling company to remove recyclables and waste from the event or will volunteers gather and haul the items to market and dispose of? For either option, what are the specific materials that can be collected as recyclables instead of trash? How soon after the event will recyclables and wastes need to be hauled away?
- 2. FORECAST THE WASTE STREAM.** Before selecting bins for waste and recycling, find out what types of waste are expected to be produced at your event. What kind of containers will the food vendors be using? Will drinks will be served in plastic bottles, metal cans or disposable cups? To encourage recycling, will you require that drinks be sold in recyclable containers instead of disposables?
- 3. CHOOSE THE BEST BINS FOR YOUR EVENT.** Based on your waste stream and attendance predictions, what quantity and capacity recycling and trash bins will you need? Should you choose restrictive lids for your recycling containers, such as circular holes for bottles/cans, to prevent contamination? Be consistent with bin style, but choose different colors for recycling and trash in order to avoid them being confused.

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Community recycling planning steps continued:

4. PLACE BINS WITH CONVENIENCE IN MIND. People are most likely to recycle when the option is convenient. Placing recycling and trash receptacles at entrances and exits is a good idea, but restrooms and dining areas are also very important locations for bins. In addition, always be sure to place recycling and trash containers directly next to each other. Bins located by themselves will attract both trash and recycling regardless of their label.

5. USE CLEAR, SIMPLE LABELS AND SIGNAGE ON RECYCLING BINS. Whether local or from out of town, your guests may not know what items are recyclable at your event. Allowing attendees to guess what is recyclable or base recycling on what is accepted at their home, will lead to contamination. Label your recycling bins with clear, simple terms and pictures if at all possible. Avoid using detailed language so users can easily read your message and quickly but properly dispose of materials.

6. CONSIDER EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH. Recycling bin labels should be simple with minimal text, however special signage regarding recycling benefits can be placed near bins to educate attendees and encourage best practices. You may also want to consider enlisting volunteers from local environmental, school or scout groups to be recycling ambassadors. Volunteers can be stationed near waste and recycling bins to answer questions and reinforce the importance of recycling with face-to-face interaction.

7. KEEP WASTE AND RECYCLING BINS CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED. Bins that are full or overflowing will encourage littering and the mixing of recycling and trash. Make sure that bins are of adequate capacity and number and that they are checked and emptied frequently by event staff.

8. EVALUATE AFTER THE EVENT AND PLAN FOR FUTURE ADJUSTMENTS. Was there an area that incurred significant littering and could be an ideal location for waste and recycling bins the next time the event is conducted? Should bin capacity or staff maintenance have been increased to avoid overflowing bins? Were there waste types that were not planned for? Event planners should include waste and recycling when evaluating what worked well and planning for future improvements.

EVALUATE YOUR PROGRAM

- BIN CAPACITY AND NUMBER
- RECYCLING CONTAMINATION
- BIN PLACEMENT/ LITTERING
- ACCURACY OF WASTE STREAM PREDICTION

For more information regarding recycling, contact York County Solid Waste Authority Recycling Coordinator, Mindy Waltemyer at m.waltemyer@ycswa.com or 717-845-1066.