

# GREEN EVENT — GUIDE —

RESOURCES FOR PLANNING A  
SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR EVENT



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR



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*This guide was developed by the City of Columbus Office of Environmental Stewardship with support from OhioEPA. If you have questions about this guide or would like more information about our office, contact us at 614-645-0815 or visit us online at [www.columbus.gov/getgreen](http://www.columbus.gov/getgreen)*

# BE INSPIRED

## **The Ohio State University, Football Games at The Ohio Stadium**

Over 100,000 people celebrate on and around campus during Buckeye football games, generating a large amount of waste. In 2011, Ohio State launched a zero waste stadium initiative as a demonstration of their leadership in sustainability. By diverting 90% or more of the waste stream, Ohio Stadium has become the largest stadium in the country to achieve zero waste. Waste is minimized at its source by choosing stadium food vendor products that are compostable or recyclable. Volunteers are positioned near waste stations to help guests determine the appropriate recycling or composting container to dispose of their waste. After the game, student volunteers collect and sort through the waste to remove any contamination and the compostable and recyclable products are delivered to the university's zero waste partners, Price Farms Organics and the Southeastern Correctional Complex, where the materials are composted and recycling is managed.

## **Community Festival (better known as, “ComFest”)**

The ComFest planning team has well defined values that include the belief that people should strive to conduct their lives in harmony with the environment. For this reason, ComFest has been recycling and composting event waste longer than any other Columbus festival. ComFest is organized using a series of committees, including a “Cleanup & Recycling Committee”. The committee is responsible for the 20 to 30 tons of waste materials generated over the course of the three day event, and the 350 volunteers that help to clean up this waste. Event guests are instructed to place waste into one of three labeled containers for trash, recycling and compost. Going beyond recycling, Comfest vends all beer sold in reusable, corn based plastic cups. The Committee ensures that the event site, Goodale Park, is returned to its original condition (or better) and encourages individuals and organizations to be proactively earth-friendly throughout the year.

## **Earth Day Festival**

Not surprisingly, the Earth Day Festival boasts impressive recycling and compost collection procedure. In 2014, the event organizers, Green Columbus, hired Rural Action's Appalachia Ohio Zero Waste Initiative to operate its waste collection program. Rural Action specializes in zero waste events, among other things. Clearly labeled trash, recycling and compost stations were set up for guest use. Volunteers then sifted through waste from each station to further sort any misplaced materials. Recycling and trash were then placed in the on-site recycling or trash dumpsters and later hauled to the recycling facility or the landfill (trash).

## Latino Festival

Until 2014, the Latino Festival had never attempted to recycle. In planning and budgeting, emphasis was placed on unavoidable needs like trash service and guest entertainment. CAPA, the event organizers, have strived to improve the event each year and with increasing pressure from event sponsors to begin recycling, the organization reached out to the City of Columbus and SWACO for assistance in implementing a recycling program at the festival.

A team formed to strategize: beginning by assessing what types of materials would likely be recycled at the event. Conveniently, all beverages are vended by CAPA, so they knew that plastic bottles, and aluminum cans would be their primary recyclable material. They also knew that draft beers sold in plastic cups would become a contaminate requiring extra guest education on this item. Festival organizers have identified vending beer in recyclable cans and bottles in future years as a means to achieve their waste reduction goals in future years. Cardboard boxes from vendors and exhibitors would also be a primary recyclable requiring management.

Fold out, cardboard box style recycling containers were provided by SWACO and were placed next to every 96 gallon refuse carts placed throughout the event space. Recycling dumpsters also provided by SWACO were placed nearby the event site, just outside of the view of the public. High school students were recruited to volunteer to operate the recycling program during the event. Volunteers monitored the recycling boxes to avoid over-filling by moving material to the recycling dumpsters, to later be hauled away by SWACO. Volunteers also visited vendors to break down and recycle cardboard boxes throughout the course of the event.

Two training sessions were held to increase the likelihood that the new recycling program would take hold and become a success with volunteers and vendors. Waste volunteers attended a one-hour training session the week before the event, to learn about what materials are and are not recyclable. Vendors received training as well to gain an understanding of the new recycling procedures at the festival.



*Ohio State University game day bike corral*

# MAKING THE COMMITMENT

At the beginning of your event planning process, it is important to come together with your organization to specifically discuss your environmental commitment. All leadership must be committed to making sustainability a priority and must understand that environmental issues such as litter and air pollution impact guest experience and the overall quality of the event.

Start by making a formal, written commitment to your sustainability goals and publicize this information on your event website to educate guests on how their actions will impact your success. Encourage guests take the following actions to participate in your event's sustainability initiative.

1. Recycle cans, plastic bottles and paper and compost, if available.
2. Prevent litter by never overfilling a trash or recycling container.
3. Walk, bike, or bus to the event.

## **Suggested goal statement:**

We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of [FESTIVAL NAME] and support sustainability, which is a core value of the Columbus community.



# RECYCLING

Columbus residents receive free recycling service at home and are accustomed to having this option available. For many people, they feel a strong moral obligation to recycle.

All events generate waste and you likely already have methodology and a budget in place for the disposal of trash. Implementing recycling for the first time will likely require additional effort at first, but as with any change, it will become routine in time. Depending on the size and type of event you are planning, adding recycling to your event can be accomplished without incurring additional costs.

The steps presented below will help you recycle successfully at your next event.

## Step one: Know your waste stream

### What is recyclable? What is trash?

Start by creating a list of most the most common items that vendors, exhibitors and guests will need to dispose of during your event. What kind of beverages and food will vendors be selling? Will exhibitors be giving away items? How will vendors and exhibitors be bringing in their wares?

The most common recyclable materials generated at events include plastic water and soda bottles, aluminum cans and cardboard from vendors. Also think of other items such as pamphlets, factsheets and other printed information; an event with several educational booths might generate higher amounts of paper as attendees tend to pick up the information as they walk by and dispose of it later after they read it.

Next, determine how many of the identified waste items can be recycled in the Columbus area. Generally, anything that can be recycled at home through the city's residential recycling program, "RecyColumbus", can also be collected at events. Rumpke operates the recycling plant in Columbus. Please note that the Rumpke recycling plant in Columbus DOES NOT accept plastic cups, plastic clamshell containers, food-contaminated plates, plastic ware or polystyrene "Styrofoam" materials, which are all items commonly found in event waste streams. Knowing your waste stream will help you work with vendors by guiding them to sell their products in recyclable containers such as plastic pop bottles, as opposed to fountain drink cups.





## **Estimate how much waste is typically thrown away at your event.**

By using information from previous years or from similar sized events, estimate the amount of trash and recycling you expect your event to generate. Businesses that haul trash and recycling can usually provide a report with the amount (tons) of waste collected at your event in the past or help create an estimate. When calling the service providers, also ask if they have records indicating the amount and size/type of trash containers used at the event and how frequently they were hauled away. Knowing this information will help ensure you select the correct size and quantity of trash and recycling containers. Tracking the amount of trash and recycling generated at your event from year to year will help you set waste reduction goals. It is possible to host “zero waste” events where there is little or no trash generated and sent to the landfill by recycling, preventing food waste and composting. Review the Zero Waste section on page 14 to begin strategizing how to implement food waste collection at your event.

## **Step two: Plan for collection**

### **How many containers are needed?**

The Rumpke recycling plant in Columbus is capable of sorting a mixed or “co-mingled” stream of materials. This means that your guests will not need to sort their recycling by material. Plastic bottles, aluminum cans, cardboard, paper, cartons and glass bottles can be mixed together; and therefore, you will only need to provide two types of containers- trash and recycling.

If you are planning a new event or were not able to obtain historical waste information specific to your event, you can use the following chart as a rough guideline for the recommended minimum number of containers based on event size. Please note that for events with a large layout, additional containers may be necessary to adequately space waste collection throughout the event space. Also be aware that, by recycling you are not collecting any more waste than you normally would. The same amount of material that would have gone into a single trash container in the past is now going to be divided in two containers.

- 0 - 1,000 attendees 10 recycling containers and 10 trash containers
- 1,000 - 5,000 attendees= 20 recycling containers and 20 trash containers
- 5,000 - 10,000 attendees= 30 recycling containers and 30 trash containers
- 10,000 - 20,000 attendees= 40 recycling containers and 40 trash containers
- 20,000 - 30,000 attendees= 50 recycling containers and 50 trash containers

### **Container specifications**

No matter what style trash and recycling containers you use, each should be clearly labeled and distinctly different. It is important that visitors be able to easily distinguish between trash and recycling disposal options at a glance. Trash and recycling containers should be labeled using both



written words and illustrations to show what types of materials are acceptable for recycling/trash. This methodology has proven to result in better recycling rates than words alone. Additionally, guests are more likely to recycle when trash containers are labeled with the word, “Landfill” as opposed to “Trash” or “Garbage”.

Most recyclables generated during events will be beverage containers; therefore it is ideal to use a recycling container lid with a small circular opening to prevent non-recyclables from being deposited. Whereas, trash lids should be large to allow for many shapes and sizes of waste to be deposited. These container features lead guests to recycle successfully.

If you have hired a recycling contractor, they may want to use their own recycling and trash containers at your event. If this is the case, discuss the container and labeling options available. Oftentimes, contractor equipment does not adhere to the recycling best practices described here.

For smaller events or events that have not hired a recycling contractor, cardboard trash and recycling boxes can be obtained for free from a variety of sources including Keep Columbus Beautiful, SWACO, and Kroger but be careful to label these boxes clearly as described above so guests can understand your methodology. Standardized container label stickers are available free while supplies last and can be acquired from Keep Columbus Beautiful (example shown in appendix).

### **Container placement**

As a best practice, always place trash and recycling containers next to each other. If trash and recycling containers are spread apart, even by a few feet, guests will put all of their waste in the closest container whether or not it is appropriate. When the containers are next to each other guests are more likely to select the appropriate container.

Additionally, there should be an opportunity for guests to dispose of waste no more than 36 feet away. Research indicates this is the distance people are willing to walk to dispose of waste. Littering becomes more common when a guest has to actively seek out waste receptacles.

When deciding on placement of trash and recycling containers, consider the following:

- Place more containers in areas where higher volumes of waste will be expected such as nearby concession areas, restrooms, entrances and exits.
- If guests are restricted from taking beverage containers into or out of the event space, place recycling and trash containers at the point of entry and/or exit.
- If vendors will generate large amounts of cardboard, consider providing additional recycling containers solely for cardboard.

Lining your waste containers with bags using the following color scheme will help to ensure waste hauling staff and/or volunteers monitoring and emptying containers do not inadvertently dispose of materials in the wrong dumpster: Clear bag= recycling; Black bag= trash; Green biodegradable bag= composting (if applicable).



## Step three: Staffing

It is possible to implement a successful recycling program at your event without anymore additional staff than the number of people your event usually requires. However, with extra help, you can ensure that guests do a better job of recycling waste. There are some full service trash and recycling businesses that can provide this labor, equipment and hauling for all of your waste needs. If you would like to limit your costs, you can also provide the same level of service with volunteers. Ideal recommended staffing is described below:

**Position: Waste Manager** - Oversees all event waste-related issues throughout planning process and during the event.

**Duties:** This person will be responsible for determining how many and where to position trash and recycling containers for public use, where the recycling and trash dumpsters will be located (if applicable) and the location of any vendor specific recycling collection points for cardboard and other bulky items on the event site plan. Additional duties include selecting and acquiring trash and recycling containers, bags and managing the labor that will empty these containers. Waste Manager will coordinate hauling of trash and recycling to the appropriate end-point.

**Position: Station Recycling Ambassador** - Customer-service focused individuals tasked with assisting guests on how to properly recycle and answering questions.

**Duties:** These people will be positioned at each trash and recycling collection point to help visitors decide which container is appropriate for their waste. In the festival setting it is common for non-recyclable materials to be deposited into recycling containers; this is called contamination. Station Recycling Ambassadors help to reduce contamination. Coordinated event t-shirts or lanyards are recommended for this position so guests know these volunteers are a reliable source for event information. The City of Columbus and SWACO are available to assist in training volunteers.

**Position: Vendor Recycling Assistant** - Customer-service focused individuals tasked with assisting vendors, exhibitors and sponsors with recycling practices.

**Duties:** Vendor Recycling Assistants establish relationships with vendors, exhibitors and sponsors by visiting their stands/booths throughout the event. When visiting, staff should help identify recyclable/non-recyclable items the vendor has on hand and provide information on any designated vendor only recycling collection points. An even higher level of service would involve staff frequently making rounds to all the vendors offering to dispose of cardboard or other recyclable items. This added convenience may encourage vendors, who otherwise may not have been inclined to recycle.

**Position: Container Monitor** - Checks recycling and/or trash containers throughout the event to ensure they do not become overly full and result in litter.

**Duties:** Continually make rounds to trash and recycling stations. When full, Container Monitors will empty recycling and/or trash into a larger specified dumpster or other designated location from which a hauler will remove at the end of the event. It is especially important that Container Monitors have a system in place to ensure they are not inadvertently disposing trash bags into a recycling dumpster or vice versa. For example, line containers with bags using the following color scheme to ensure volunteers do not inadvertently dispose of materials in the wrong container: Clear bag= recycling; Black bag= trash; Green biodegradable bag= composting (if applicable). Overly full containers lead to litter and additional clean-up costs. Container Monitors should also collect litter that guests have dropped on the event site.

**Position: Hauler** - A private company or volunteer with a truck to move all of an event's combined recycling and trash to the appropriate end-points.

**Duties:** Hauler will collect all of the material Container Monitors have disposed during the event and drive recycling to either the recycling plant, a SWACO public recycling drop-box with trashing going to the SWACO landfill. If you plan to use a public recycling drop-box for disposal, please notify SWACO two weeks prior to your event by calling 614-871-5100.

## Step four: Guest education

In order to successfully recycle at your event, guests must be able to easily understand how to properly use your recycling and trash containers. Events are notorious for having poorly sorted trash and recycling which is troublesome when recycling arrives at the recycling plant. This problem typically occurs because event guests do not understand what materials to put into each container.

To prevent this common problem at your event take the following steps:

- Provide information on recycling procedures on the event website, map or other literature.
- Make announcements from stage reminding guests to recycle.
- As mentioned above in the 'Container' section, trash and recycling containers should be labeled using written words and illustrations to show what types of materials are acceptable for recycling/trash. This methodology has been proven to result in higher recycling rates than using written words alone. Additionally, the guests are more successful recycling when trash containers are labeled with the words, "Landfill" as opposed to "Trash" or "Garbage". Standardized container label stickers are available free while supplies last and can be acquired from Keep Columbus Beautiful (example shown in appendix).
- As mentioned in the "Staffing" section, event staff should understand and be able to answer questions regarding recycling protocol.

## Step five: Vendor education

It is easy to focus on guest experience so much so that you overlook vendors as a large contributing source of trash and recycling material, but vendors, exhibitors and sponsors commonly leave behind a large quantity of cardboard boxes and food containers such as jugs or jars. Educating your vendors should begin before your event, with communication and assistance continuing throughout the event as described below:

- Communicate your event's sustainability goals and recycling protocol to your vendors via email using the template provided in appendix.
- Discourage vendors, exhibitors and sponsors from giving away a lot of brochures or any promotional item that is not long-lasting. Guests take free items, regardless of whether they are actually desired. These items then become litter or simply are thrown away when they return home. Make exhibitors aware of your goals and encourage them to give thoughtful consideration to the items they distribute. Promotional giveaways that help guests lead a more sustainable lifestyle are highly recommended such as a reusable water bottle or shopping bag.
- Notify vendors of recycling availability and procedure prior to the event and, as described above in the "Staffing" section with the help of a Vendor Recycling Assistant.
- Suggest the following waste reduction strategies below by adding to the template provided in appendix:
  - Recommend that vendors select and purchase foodservice packaging that is recyclable or reusable. For example, vendors should be encouraged to sell beverages in cans or bottles instead of fountain beverages in non-recyclable cups. Doing so will also help reduce the amount of straws thrown away.
  - Vendors selling bottles, cans and other recyclables should post flyers reminding customers to recycle these items.
  - It is best if vendors sell products with less packaging to reduce overall event waste. For example, a vendor selling corn could sell it on a stick instead of on a stick and on a plate.
  - Vendors should only provide the utensils required for the type of food sold. For example, avoid providing prepackaged sets of cutlery for sandwiches or items that only require a fork or a spoon. Also avoid individually wrapped cutlery as the plastic wrap is unnecessary waste and are easily blown away by wind, becoming litter.
  - Vendors should provide condiments in large reusable tubs with pumps, or only provide condiment packets upon request.
  - Distribution of napkins should be controlled by providing a small number upon request. This methodology will prevent customers from taking more than they will use, creating unnecessary waste.

- Vendors can help to minimize waste and reduce costs by providing a discount on beverages for customers using reusable cups or bringing their own reusable bottle. This is a permissible activity per Ohio Revised Code: 3717-1-054(O) so long as contact between the pouring utensil and the lip-contact area of the drinking cup does not occur.

Consider incentivizing vendors to follow these policies by giving prime booth placement to those who have made an environmental commitment, and offer awards for those who meet your green standards.

## Step six: Hauling

Some event coordinators contract with a private company in order to position a large trash and/or recycling dumpster on the event site to be used as a collection point for waste generated throughout the event. If this is the case for your event, dumpsters should be clearly labeled “trash” or “recycling” and event staff or volunteers should be trained to know what type of material to deposit into each dumpster. Larger events should consider renting compacting dumpsters to save space and reduce the number of times collection is required.

At the conclusion of your event, recycling will need to be transported using a private or volunteer hauler to the recycling plant, with trash being transported to the SWACO landfill.

Large events require contracting with a private hauler (or the City of Columbus, Refuse Division) for these transportation services. When you contract with a hauler, you will need to provide the following information:

- When dumpsters will need to be dropped off and picked up
- How many times they will be emptied throughout the event
- Where the trash and recycling dumpsters will be located on the event site (i.e. if you have an event map, provide one with dumpster locations clearly labeled).

Small events may be able to self-transport recycling to one of many SWACO recycling dropboxes located throughout the city (locations available online at [www.swaco.org](http://www.swaco.org)). There is no charge to deposit event recycling in a SWACO drop box, but SWACO requests two weeks' notice prior to using a public dropbox for event recycling, by calling 614-871-5100.

Waste can also be self-hauled to the landfill located at 4239 London Groveport Road, Grove City, Ohio. Vehicles are weighed as they enter and exit the landfill to calculate a per ton cost to deposit waste.

### Local trash and/or recycling haulers:

- City of Columbus
- Waste Management
- Republic Waste Services
- Rumpke
- Local Waste



# ZERO-WASTE EVENTS

It is possible to host a “zero waste” event where there is little or no trash generated and sent to the landfill by minimizing food waste and recycling food waste and associated waste through composting.

Composting is nature’s way to recycle (biodegrade) plant and animal material (things that were once living or made from things that were once living) into a soil-like material or “compost”. Compost is rich with nutrients and beneficial microorganisms and is an excellent soil conditioner for growing plants. In fact, natural healthy soils contain some composted material. By recycling plant and animal derived wastes (also called organic wastes or compostable wastes) and returning to the soil, we are feeding the soil and returning materials back to the earth.

While there are other ways to recycle food scraps, composting is the most common one used for the types of compostable wastes collected at events. For this reason, this document focuses primarily on composting.

## **Step one: Know your waste stream**

### **What is compostable? What is recycling? What is trash?**

Consider what items the food vendors will be selling and make a list of the compostables that will be generated as a result. Taking corn cobs as an example, customers will need to dispose of the cob in addition to the wooden stick and any wrapping or plate used for serving it. The inedible cob, wooden stick, napkins and other paper products would be accepted as composting. If the corn was vended using an aluminum foil wrapping or a polystyrene “Styrofoam” plate, these items are not recyclable or compostable and would need to be disposed of in the trash. However, a customer buying an elephant ear served on a paper plate will only have to dispose of a paper plate and napkins and any leftovers, all of which are compostable.

Having guests mistakenly place non-compostable items into the composting container is problematic for the compost processing facility. When contamination levels are high, composting might not be possible at all. With planning and coordination, it is possible to nearly eliminate trash and avoid the potential for guests to contaminate the composting or recycling waste streams. Minimize contaminants by working with vendors to eliminate their use from your event. For example, compostable service ware is now available as an alternative to traditional plastic versions. Paper products can be composted in place of Styrofoam or aluminum foil.

## Compostable service ware

Compostable service ware (plates, containers, cups, straws, napkins and cutlery) makes it easier to collect food scraps for recycling at composting facilities because the service ware can be placed along any uneaten food into the compostables containers.

The following are considered compostable:

- Paper or cardboard that is not coated with regular plastic such as paper napkins and pizza boxes.
- Paper and cardboard coated with wax
- Paper and cardboard coated with compostable plastic
- Compostable plastic
  - Compostable plastics are derived from plant starches. These plastics look like any other plastic with the exception of special labeling. The Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) provides third party verification that a product is able to be composted at a commercial facility. Look for certified paper and compostable plastic products that carry this label.
  - Some manufacturers may have certified their products without clearly labeling their product, choosing instead to put certification information on product specification sheets and/or their website. BPI has a catalog of companies and the products that have been certified, which offers an easy way to verify if the product you intend to buy is compostable. You can access the catalog at <http://products.bpiworld.org/>
- Don't confuse "bio-based" and "biodegradable" labeling with "compostable" labels. Compostable items degrade at the same rate as other organic materials (yard wastes, manures, food scraps); whereas, items labeled as bio-based or biodegradable might not biodegrade quickly enough to be considered compostable.



## Step two: Plan for collection

A third container for compostables will need to accompany trash and recycling to dispose of food waste and items such as napkins, paper plates, wax-paper wraps, and other service ware that are considered compostable. These containers must also be labeled with the kind of food scraps and other compostables that are acceptable. If you contract with an organics waste hauler, they can provide information on the items that are acceptable at the compost processing facility.

Organics waste haulers can also transport the organic waste to a compost processing facility for processing. These companies may be able to provide specialized containers that are leak proof and monitor them throughout the event.

### Composting service providers:

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| • Eartha Limited              | • Rural Action, Appalachia Ohio Zero Waste Initiative |
| • Garick Corporation (Paygro) | • Viridion  |
| • Future Organics             | • Organix Recycling                                   |



## **Step three: Staffing**

**Include food waste/composting training as part of the positions described for staffing recycling.**

It is strongly advised that zero waste efforts are implemented when it is possible to have recycling ambassadors at the recycling stations helping attendees clearly sort compostable items correctly. While people are more familiar with traditional recycling, zero waste efforts are not mainstream yet and mistakes are common as people learn how to distinguish between composting, recycling and trash.

## **Step four: Guest education**

It is very important that containers are labeled clearly with text and images of acceptable materials so that Recycling Ambassadors can help attendees sort items correctly. This is also a great opportunity to educate attendees on what is and isn't compostable. Standardized container label stickers are available free while supplies last and can be acquired from Keep Columbus Beautiful (example shown in appendix). Repeat all other guest education efforts described in the recycling section of this document above.

## **Step five: Vendor education**

Include information on how vendors are expected to participate in your new composting program by modifying the type of materials they use to serve food and where to deposit food waste throughout the event.

## **Step six: Hauling**

Discuss with the organics hauler if they will be using a large organics container to consolidate all the compostables. If so, the container should be labeled as "Food Scraps / Compostables / Organics Only". The container must be leak proof and, ideally, lock to prevent people from putting regular trash or recyclables in it.

# LITTER PREVENTION AND SITE CLEAN UP

By monitoring and emptying trash and recycling containers and limiting promotional giveaways as described, you will have already prevented litter from occurring at your event. Despite your best efforts, litter may still occur and therefore it is important to assign those assisting with post-event cleanup to specifically look for any materials left on the ground to be collected and thrown away.

Other services and considerations:

**Keep Columbus Beautiful (KCB):** KCB is a program offered by the City of Columbus, Department of Public Service. By filling out a simple request form, trash grabbers and other site clean-up tools can be borrowed free to help make site clean-up easier. Additionally, KCB can provide you with recycling and trash boxes, gloves, standardized container labels and more. Contact 614-645-2421 or [keepcolumbusbeautiful@columbus.gov](mailto:keepcolumbusbeautiful@columbus.gov)

**Street Sweeping:** Some event activities may require street sweeping or power washing to ensure the event site is returned to its pre-event condition. Contact the City of Columbus, Department of Public Service at 614-645-5930 to discuss whether this requirement is applicable to your event or to contract street sweeping service with the City of Columbus or other private contractors.



# TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Transportation preferences are shifting and people are increasingly choosing to get out of their cars to walk, bike or take the bus. For this reason, it is more important than ever to consider these modes of travel as you are planning for parking and transportation to and from your event.

## Bicycling

**CoGo Bike Share powered by Medical Mutual:** CoGo offers bicycle rentals that can aid visitors getting to your event, especially when car parking is at a premium. 30 CoGo stations and 300 bicycles are located nearby most downtown event locations. Consider that visitors will want to use CoGo to travel to your event and avoid blocking access to stations with exhibitor booths, stages, and other equipment during planning of the event layout. Not only do CoGo users need to be able to access the station to park their bicycles, but CoGo staff may need access to remove or add bicycles to station locations using their equipment van. Contact CoGo to learn more about station locations, notify them about your event and discuss special services they can offer to make your event a success.

Visit [www.cogobikeshare.com](http://www.cogobikeshare.com)

**Pedal Instead:** Local bike advocacy organization, Yay Bikes! sets up and staffs a temporary valet bike parking corral for a fee to event organizers. Valet bike parking corrals help reduce car congestion at your event and provide a secure, free parking location to visitors traveling by bike. This service provides the additional benefit of helping to reduce the amount of bikes locked to trees, signs and other areas that impedes the flow of pedestrians at your event. Hiring Pedal Instead highlights your organizations commitment to the environment and the health of our community.

Visit [yaybikes.com/programs/pedal-instead/](http://yaybikes.com/programs/pedal-instead/)

**Central Ohio Greenways:** Many of the city's most popular shared use paths, or greenway trails, pass through the downtown core where many events and festivals take place. Encourage guests to ride their bikes following these routes or by traveling on-road, depending on their comfort level. Events may not block or close a trail without permission from the City of Columbus, Department of Recreation and Parks and appropriate public notice.

Contact: Department of Recreation and Parks, Special Events Office at 614-645-3800

## Bus Service

Encourage guests to take the COTA bus to your event to reduce pollution and congestion caused by guests traveling by car. Many routes are available into downtown from surrounding municipalities as well as a downtown circulator.

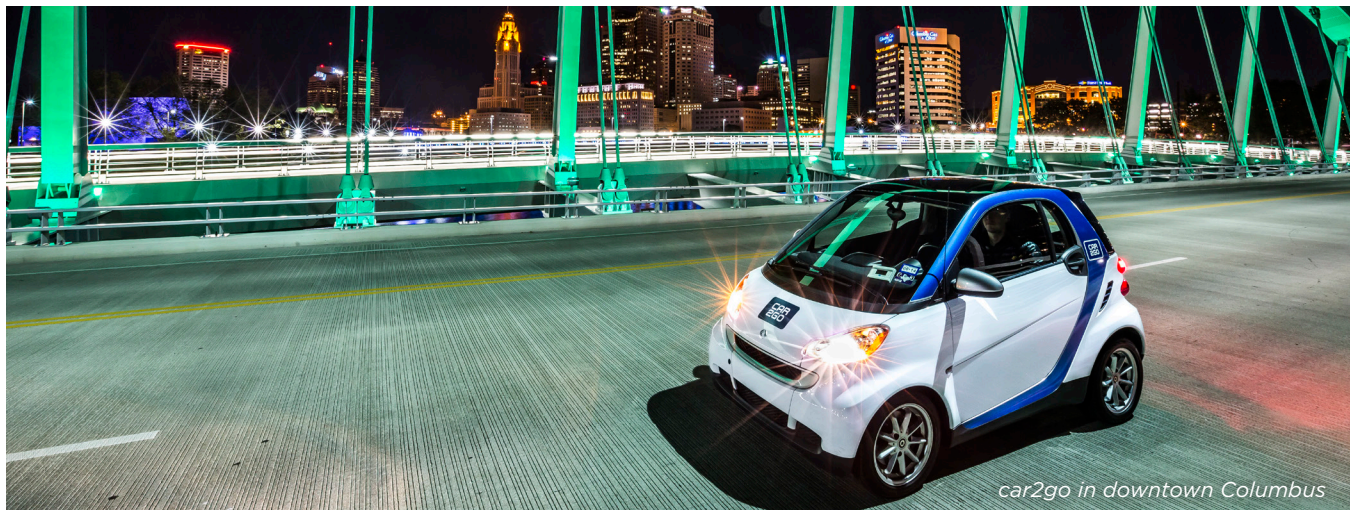
Visit [www.cota.com](http://www.cota.com)

## Car sharing

Private company, car2go Columbus offers easy access to 300 smart car vehicles in Columbus. Participants must become a member to use the service. Without a reservation, members can pay by the minute to use any available vehicle and park free at city meters and in some private lots (restrictions apply). Vehicles can be found throughout the city using the car2go smart phone app. One car sharing vehicle reduces the need for four to ten privately owned vehicles.

To make congested event parking even easier on car2go Columbus members, the company offers a convenient vehicle drop-off service called the DropZone. Members taking car2go to or from an event can simply pull up, log out, and team car2go will relocate the vehicle at no cost to individual members. The service allows festivals and major events to offer innovative, alternative transit options while helping to reduce parking congestion by fitting two car2go vehicles in one traditionally sized space. Event coordinators can contact car2go Columbus to coordinate a DropZone service.

Visit <http://columbus.car2go.com/>, [columbus@car2go.com](mailto:columbus@car2go.com), 614-222-0902



# WATER CONSERVATION

Avoid waste bottles and cups by utilizing drinking fountains. When drinking fountains are not available in the quantity necessary for your event, the City of Columbus, Department of Public Utilities can loan the “Water for Everyone Today (WET)” for a temporary, portable drinking fountain with multiple spigots.

Contact: Department of Public Utilities, Sustainability Director’s Office at 614-645-6703.



*Water for Everyone Today (WET) fountain*



# ENERGY

## **Solar and wind power source**

The Green Power Alternative Demonstrator, or G-PAD, is a portable electrical generation station. Using solar panels and a wind turbine, the G-PAD collects and stores clean electrical power. The G-Pad provides a renewable power source free for use at fairs, festivals or other remote gatherings and using energy efficiency technology. The G-Pad is 25 feet long, 9 feet wide and weighs more than 14,000 pounds. The G-PAD was engineered and built by master craftsmen of the Electrical Industry of Central Ohio Labor Management Cooperation Committee (LMCC) and the Electrical Trades Center. Visit <http://www.the-gpad.org/>

## **Conserve fuel**

Idling vehicles and excessive use of generators for food trucks, golf carts and inflatable games detract from the guest experience with noise and exhaust fumes. These emissions can even trigger adverse health reactions in at-risk groups such as those with asthma and heart conditions. Warm temperatures during the summer event season further exacerbate this problem, which can sometimes cause need for public notification via an air quality alert issued by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

Establish a policy for your event to direct event staff and vendors in limiting harmful emissions. For example, emissions can be limited by using bicycles, electric golf carts and segways for event staff transportation. Require contractors, vendors and exhibitors to turn off vehicles during load-in and load-out rather than idling their vehicles.

Selecting your event site with power needs in mind can avoid the need for generators. As mentioned above, the G-PAD may be able to reduce the need for a traditional electric generation on site.

For parades consider using horses, electric vehicles and vehicles with particulate filters to reduce fuel usage and related emissions as much as possible.

# GUEST EDUCATION

Invite one or more of the environmental organizations listed below to host a free booth at your event to help educate your guests on environmental topics.

- Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative - <http://www.centralohioraingardens.org>
- Central Ohio Sierra Club - <http://www.ohio.sierraclub.org/central/>
- Central Ohio USGBC - <http://www.usgbc-coh.org/>
- City of Columbus, GreenSpot Program - <http://www.columbusgreenspot.org>
- Clean Fuels Ohio - <http://www.cleanfuelsohio.org>
- COTA - <http://www.cota.com>
- Columbus Audubon - <http://www.columbusaudubon.org>
- Columbus Green Building Forum - <http://www.cgbf.org>
- Columbus Outdoor Pursuits - <http://www.outdoor-pursuits.org>
- Columbus Zoo & Aquarium - <http://www.colszoo.org>
- Consider Biking - <http://www.considerbiking.org>
- Central Ohio Science Institute (COSI) - <http://www.cosi.org>
- Franklin Park Conservatory - <http://www.fpconservatory.org>
- Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District- <http://www.franklinswcd.org>
- Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries (FACT)- <http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org>
- Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) - <http://www.olentangywatershed.org>
- Friends of the Scioto River - <http://www.sciotoriverfriends.org>



- Greater Columbus Growing Coalition - <http://www.columbusgcbc.org>
- Green Energy Ohio - <http://www.greenenergyohio.org>
- Land Trust Alliance - <https://www.landtrustalliance.org/about/regional-programs/mw/COLT>
- League of Conservation Voters - <http://www.e-tca.com/oclv/home.asp>
- Local Matters - <http://www.local-matters.org>
- Metro Parks - <http://www.metroparks.net>
- Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC )- <http://www.morpc.org>
- No Child Left Inside Central Ohio Collaborative - <http://www.kidsandnature.org>
- Ohio Audubon / Grange Insurance Audubon Center - <http://www.oh.audubon.org>
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources - <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us>
- Ohio Environmental Council - <http://www.theoec.org>
- Ohio Environmental Education Fund - <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/oeeef/>
- Ohio EPA - <http://www.epa.state.oh.us>
- Ohio to Erie Trail - <http://www.ohiotoerietrail.org>
- Pedal Instead - <http://www.pedalinstead.org/>
- Rails to Trails Conservancy - <http://www.railstotrails.org>
- Simply Living - <http://www.simplyliving.org>
- Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) - <http://www.swaco.org>
- The Nature Conservancy - <http://www.nature.org/ohio>
- Urban Land Institute - <http://www.columbus.uli.org/>
- Yay! Bikes - <http://www.yaybikes.org>

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Composting** - A mixture of organic substances such as organic food waste, paper fibers, yard waste that will decompose and be used as a rich, fertilizing soil. Composting creates a valuable product from waste instead of paying to dispose of this material in a landfill.

**Comingled** - See “Mixed stream” below

**Contamination** - Non-recyclable items that have been deposited into a recycling container.

**Generated** - In reference to recycling, “generated” materials are those that are discarded by event participants (exhibitors, staff, and guests).

**Hauler** - As referenced throughout this document a hauler is the entity hired to transport trash/ recycling or compost material from the event site to the appropriate end destination (recycling plant, or landfill).

**Mixed stream or comingled** - In reference to recycling, mixed or comingled streams are those that do not require sorting of recycling based on material such as plastic, metal, paper. Rather, mixed or comingled recycling can be placed into one container and sorted at a later time at a recycling plant.

**SWACO** - The Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio is the organization that operates the Franklin County Landfill. Learn more at [www.SWACO.org](http://www.SWACO.org).

**Waste streams** - Describes every material discarded at an event.

**Zero Waste** - Any one-time program, occasion or event that reduces waste by sending 90% or more of trash away from landfills through use of recycling, composting, and conservation.

## NOTES

Listings of service providers in this guide may not be exhaustive and does not constitute an endorsement of any company. If your company provides these services and wants to be included in future listings, please contact 645-7673.

# APPENDIX & EXAMPLES

**Container Labels:** Standardized container label stickers are available from Keep Columbus Beautiful — free while supplies last. Contact 614-645-2421 or [keepcolumbusbeautiful@columbus.gov](mailto:keepcolumbusbeautiful@columbus.gov)



**Recycling Guide:** Printable (4 per page) quick reference guide for recycling volunteers. Find online at [www.columbus.gov/GreenEventGuide](http://www.columbus.gov/GreenEventGuide)



**Communication with Vendors:** An example to communicate your sustainability goals and recycling protocol to your vendors via email. Text is below. Printable and customizable handout can be found online at [www.columbus.gov/GreenEventGuide](http://www.columbus.gov/GreenEventGuide)

## WE ARE COMMITTED.

Careful and deliberate steps have been taken throughout the event planning process to reduce environmental impact of FESTIVAL NAME and support sustainability, which is a core value of the Columbus community.

We need your help to fulfill this commitment and ask that you follow the guidelines below:

**Carefully select food service containers.** Serve food items in reusable or recyclable containers. Avoid use of plastic cups, clam shells and cutlery, polystyrene- “Styrofoam” and other materials that cannot be recycled in Columbus.

**Recycle.** Collection will be provided for cardboard boxes, plastic and glass bottles, jugs and jars and other recyclable items. Use this service and do your part to avoid putting recyclables into containers designated for trash only.

**Avoid idling your vehicle or running a generator to reduce air pollution.** Emissions from a car, truck or generator negatively impacts guest experience and is a contributor to air pollution. Limit time spent idling as much as is possible.

**Reduce giveaway items and print materials.** Limit the amount of promotional items and print materials you give away. These often become litter or are thrown away at home. If you want to provide a promotional item, please take steps to ensure it has a lasting purpose such as a reusable water bottle, grocery bag, etc.



FOLLOW  
THE  
CHECK  
LIST



# AT A GLANCE GREEN EVENT CHECK LIST

- ☒ Establish an environmental Policy Statement and share it with guests, vendors and staff.
- ☒ Coordinate with car2go, CoGo Bike Share, Pedal Instead and COTA to allow guests to travel to your event without need for their personal vehicle.
- ☒ Request a temporary, portable drinking fountain from the Department of Public Utilities should you need it.
- ☒ Plan for your power needs to limit use of generators and request the Green Power Alternative Demonstrator for a clean source of energy, if needed.
- ☒ Determine which items to be distributed at your event are recyclable, trash or compostable (if applicable), making an effort to reduce unnecessary waste.
- ☒ Acquire trash and recycling containers to be placed throughout the event space. Label these containers "Landfill", "Recyclables" and "Compostables" with standardized labels.
- ☒ Hire a private hauler or plan to transport trash and recycling to the appropriate facility.
- ☒ Train event staff, contractor and/or volunteers to assist during the event, including reminding guests and vendors to recycle throughout the event.
- ☒ Clean up any litter left on the ground after your event.



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

Office of Environmental Stewardship  
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Phone: 614-645-0815/ Web: [www.columbus.gov/getgreen](http://www.columbus.gov/getgreen)