



ZERO-WASTE Event Guidelines





SACRAMENTO STATE ZERO WASTE EVENT GUIDELINES

What is a Zero Waste Event?

"Zero Waste" means at least 90% of waste generated at an event is diverted from the landfill. Keeping campus waste out of local landfills is a critical component of sustainable operations at Sac State and for reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.

The importance of Zero Waste

Zero Waste reduces Sac State's climate impact. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 42% of all greenhouse gas emissions come from the manufacturing and use of goods, including food, products, and packaging. Reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting dramatically lessens emissions from production, as well as additional emissions released from waste decomposing in landfills.

Zero Waste is a Sac State Priority

- President Nelsen has established a 2030 zero-waste goal for Sac State.
- California Senate bill SB1383 mandates the collection and diversion of all food waste from the landfill, as well as the rescue of at least 25% of left-over food.
- CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy 5236.00 requires the following:
 - Eliminate single-use plastic water bottles by January 1, 2023. A 25% reduction in single-use plastic water bottles purchased and supplied will be achieved annually.
 - Eliminate plastic straws no later than January 1, 2019.
 - Eliminate single-use plastic carryout bags no later than January 1, 2019.
 - Eliminate single-use polystyrene (e.g. STYROFOAM™) foodservice items no later than January 1, 2021.
 - Replace single-use plastic items with materials that are reusable, locally compostable, and/or recyclable.

How to Plan a Zero Waste Event

There are three main steps in successfully facilitating a zero waste event:

1. Control what's coming into your event by reducing packaging and using reusable or compostable products wherever possible.
2. Ensure you have the proper waste receptacles, event materials, and staff to handle waste appropriately. These will vary depending on the event size.
3. Educate attendees and event staff on proper waste sorting and why these efforts are important.





STEP 1: CONTROL WHAT'S COMING INTO YOUR EVENT

Reducing waste at your event starts with controlling everything that's used at the event. Work with vendors that use reduced packing. Wherever possible, opt for reusable products, this will eliminate waste before it starts. When disposable service ware is necessary, always opt for compostable plates, cups, cutlery, and napkins. These items can be placed in organic waste receptacles and diverted from landfills.

- Catering
 - Ensure that the caterers can provide either reusable or compostable service ware. Consider directing caterers to the [Eco-products](#) website if they are interested in purchasing compostable products.
 - Communicate all relevant waste requirements and policies in advance, to ensure appropriate materials are purchased and vendors are familiar with the campus waste management program.
 - Market the event as zero waste. Educate vendors on proper waste sorting and which items to avoid, such as plastic straws or Styrofoam.
- Events without catering
 - Waste generation at your event is likely minimal. See the "Beyond Zero Waste" section of this page for other ways to make your event more sustainable.

After ensuring that the materials at your event are primarily reusable and/or compostable, make sure they are properly handled. For more information on proper waste sorting at Sac State check out our campus waste sorting guide: [https://www.csus.edu/experience/innovation-creativity/sustainability/ internal/ documents/waste-sorting-guide-final1.pdf](https://www.csus.edu/experience/innovation-creativity/sustainability/internal/documents/waste-sorting-guide-final1.pdf)

STEP 2: REQUEST PROPER ZERO WASTE RECEPTICLES & SERVICES

For your waste to be successfully diverted from local landfills, you need to ensure that you have requested the proper waste recepticles and staff to handle waste appropriately. Depending on the location, size, and the number of attendees at your event, the required materials waste recepticles and services may vary.

Recepticles and services include:

- Waste Stations: Make sure you provide color-coded bins with appropriate signage bins to collect event waste. At Sac State, green bins are for compost, blue bins are for Recycling and black bins are for landfill materials.
- Dumpster Rental: your event may require renting a compost and/or recycling dumpster depending on the location and number of attendees.
- Zero Waste Sorting Station Staffers: your event may require staff to monitor the proper disposal of items depending on location and number of attendees.
- Removal or cover of existing trash cans in your event space
- Pre- and post-event cleanup





STEP 3: EDUCATE YOUR GUESTS

Zero waste events are most successful when attendees are made aware of the process and have the tools and information to properly participate. Zero waste events are also a great way to engage and educate the campus community on Sac State's sustainability goals. Take the following actions to ensure your guests know how to do their part:

- Use pre-event messaging — such as invitations and RSVP forms — to inform guests that your event will be zero waste
- Educate guests on proper waste sorting during your event through
 - Signage on and near waste bins
 - Signage at food and beverage stations
 - Repeated verbal announcements
 - Volunteers at waste stations

Leftover Food Donation

Many events are left with more food than attendees can eat. Instead of letting this food go uneaten, use campus resources like epicure extras and the Hornet Reuse App to donate leftover food to students.

The SB1383 mandate requires all Tier 2 Edible Food Generators to have a plan to recover edible food by January 1, 2024. Under the legislation, campus events count as tier 2 Edible Food Generators.

Beyond Zero Waste

Want to go beyond reducing landfill waste to make your event even more sustainable? Check out these tips:

- Avoid plastic decorations and giveaway items
- Eliminate latex and Mylar balloons, and avoid the use of helium
- Encourage attendees to use public transportation or carpool to your campus event.
- Reduce the amount of meat, such as red meat. This will lower the carbon footprint of your event.





California State University, Sacramento
Office of Sustainability
Modoc 2004
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819
Email: Sustainability@csus.edu
Web: <https://www.csus.edusustainability/>



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