RECYCLING & WASTE REDUCTION STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

This program is a partnership of:





WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25TH 1:00 - 2:15 P.M. ET.



# Agenda

#### 0:00 -25:00 Case study presentations:

- ZeroWastePA, Pennsylvania Resource Council
- The University of Texas at Austin

#### 30:00 - 70:00 Breakout group discussions

- Main Room \*\*General any related topic + Tech support
- o Room 1 Q&A w/speakers
- o Room 2 Planning & logistics
- o Room 3 Bins & Signage selection
- o Room 4 Outreach & education

70:00 - 75:00 Close out program

# Participate!

- Share thoughts through chat
- Mute yourself when not talking
- Turn camera <u>on</u> during discussion
- Review discussion notes
- Share Resources
- Share Photos

#### Presenters



Tere Waversity of Texas at Auster



Zernysprahia Resource Conner



# Zero Waste Assistance & Special Events

PENNSYLVANIA RESOURCES COUNCIL

## In this presentation



#### **PRC Service Suite**

Hazardous Household Waste

E-Waste

Hard to Recycle Conservation Workshops

Youth Education Policy & Advocacy

Zero Waste Events Waste Auditing & Technical Assistance



Audit Site Visit Questionnaire SAMPLE PDF

## Zero Waste Technical Assistance

- Primarily takes the form of audits and analysis
- Includes:
  - Site evaluation
  - Waste collection and on-site sorting
  - Recommendations report and analysis
  - Implementation support
- As small-scale as a local restaurant or tea shop, to as large-scale as airports and universities



# ZWPA: Zero Waste Events

- Work with businesses, institutions, municipalities, and special events to minimize waste production and maximize diversion
- Aim for 90%+ rate of diversion
- Accomplished through:
  - Event Staffing
  - Education
  - Purchasing and Procurement
  - Partnerships
  - Data Collection & Evaluation
- Correlate waste diversion with greenhouse gas reduction, energy savings, and economic impact through the EPA's WARM Model

#### ZWPA: Zero Waste Kit Rental

- Offered at events of 250 or fewer that can be indoor or outdoor
- We provide compost, recycling, and landfill clearstream containers
- Compostable service-ware, material disposal, oil collection, and signage are offered as well

Service/Item	Cost	Unit
Zero Waste Station You may rent up to 4 stations.	\$30	Per Station
Compost Disposal Per full 45-gallon bag	\$20	Per Bag
PRC Delivery/Pick Up Within City of Pittsburgh only. Out of City rentals should plan to pick up/drop off equipment at our office.	\$50	One-Way
Pre- Event Technical Assistance	\$45	Hourly



## Case Study: The Marathon

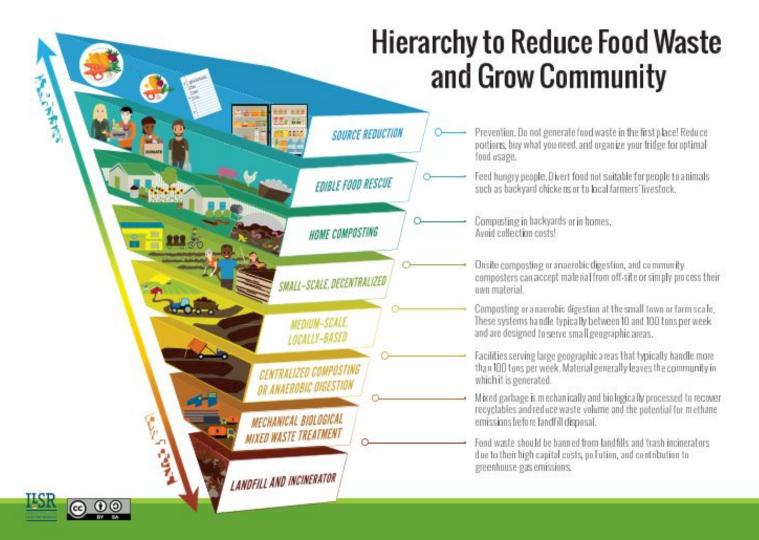
- 26,000 runners, complex assortment of waste, exceptionally large area covered by 35+ stations, numerous on-site concessionaires and vendors
- Between 2013 and 2016, reduced landfilled waste by 6.7 tons
- Increased total diversion by 9.2 tons through more effective collection of organics, textiles, recyclables, and hard to recycle items
- Consistently achieving over 90% reduction, while decreasing overall waste quantity





#### Case Study: The Three Rivers Arts Festival

- 10-day festival, 600+ hours of combined staff labor, 150,000-500,000 attendees, 35+ waste stations over entire parks or square blocks of Downtown Pittsburgh
- Music, arts, crafts, food, and more create 30+ tons of fry-oil, plastic, organic, and metal waste
- ~75% diversion pre-pandemic, changes in location, operations, and other external factors have reduced diversion post-pandemic
- Planning for these events begins months in advance and includes a detailed scope of work proposal and frequent contact with public and private stakeholders





# Contact Information

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ZeroWastePA Program Manager

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**JANUARY 2023** 



# COMPOSTING FOR ON-CAMPUS EVENTS

**MORGAN LANER** 

Zero Waste Program Coordinator, The University of Texas at Austin



# Big Picture Structure

- Flagship campus for University of Texas system
- 18 million square feet of building floor area
- 52,000+ students
- 14,000+ employees





# How do zero waste events fit in?

- Zero waste goal
- Operations-focused unit within Facilities Services
- Centrally funded for programming in education/general use spaces
- Staff & intern-supported project team





# Challenge: Access to Compost

- Build route for E&G spaces
- Capacity based on daily operations
- Goal: have additional toters in specific corrals that can be moved for temporary additional capacity





# Standard Event Bin Options:

Landfill Trash & Recycle

#### **Current Operations**

- Rented through another Facilities Services branch
- 32 gallon Brutes (grey & blue)

#### **Next Step**

 Standard bumper stickers on both sides of bins, visible from multiple angles

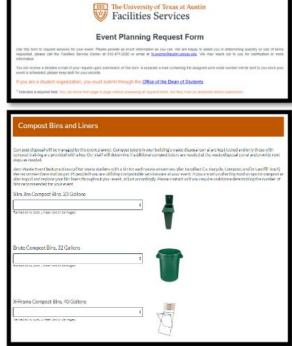






# Challenge: Renting Out Compost Bins for Events

- Opt-in services
- Integration with primary Event Planning Request Form



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# **Event Compost Bin Options**

#### **Considerations** during research:

- Visibility
- Size
- Easy to remove (for storage & replacing liners)
- Sturdy







Clearstream X-Frame + Billboard Sign Kit



Brute 32 Gallon Bin



# Challenge: Reducing Contamination

- Controlled access to toters
- Required compost training
- Consultations
- Sell BPI-certified compostable serviceware











# Challenge: Cost & Staffing

- Hired support
- Bin monitor resources
- Paid services & products vs. free options





# Challenge: Outreach & Education

- Promotion to event planners
- Persuasive arguments
- Tools for attendees
  - Promotion toolkit
  - Customizable waste bin signage







**Morgan Laner** 

morgan.laner@austin.utexas.edu



# Additional Resources

- Zero Waste Program
- Zero Waste Events
- ZWEco Supply Store
- Customizable Waste Bin Signage Template
- Food Vendor Conversation Guide
- Sample Monthly Training Recording

# Live Poll Question:

#### What are your biggest challenges with special events? (click multiple)

- Operational logistics / coordinating service
- Coordinating vendor participation
- Coordinating other stakeholders
- Training staff
- General planning logistics
- Funding
- Attendee outreach & engagement
- Other (share details in chat)

# Live Poll Answers:

What are your biggest challenge(s) with special emultiple if applicable) (Multiple Choice) *	events? (select
121/121 (100%) answered	
Operational logistics / coordinating service	(42/121) 35%
Coordinating vendor participation	(45/121) 37%
Coordinating other stakeholders	(29/121) 24%
Training staff	(32/121) 26%
General planning logistics	(24/121) 20%
Funding	(24/121) 20%
Attendee outreach & engagement	(59/121) 49%

# Transition to Breakout Groups

# Room #1: Q&A + Discussion w/ Speakers

# Room #2: Planning & Logistics

Moderator: Nikhil Schneider

- Training & procedures
- Coordinating service providers
- Coordinating w/ vendors on food packaging
- ?

# Room #3: Bins & Signage

Moderator: Lin King & Alec Cooley

- Appropriate bins specifications
- What to display on signage
- Where to place bins
- ?

# Room #4: Outreach & Engagement

Moderator: Laura Gonzalez-Ospina

- Bin station monitors
- Displays, tabeling
- Other creative engagement
- Event Communication (before, during, and after)
- ?

# Main Room (stay here)

Moderator: Julie Muir

- Tech support
- General discussion other topics related to event waste reduction

#### Select Room Now



• If you have trouble, leave note in the chat / stay in Main room and someone will help you.

• Turn on Cameras in breakout room.

### Notes: Room 1 - Q&A w/ Speakers

- Questions for Zach from chat
  - Do you have a template that you would be willing to share in terms of a purchasing policy?
    - \*in progress because language & policies seem to be weirdly hard to come by even though we all want it\*
  - How do you provide the Zero waste kit rental? Specifically how are you providing support with oil collection?
    - We have a storage location with our compost dumpster where we keep our equipment, we will determine either a pick-up or drop-off model for the equipment (bags, bins, etc)
    - They will then drop off the waste and equipment there
  - How do you acquire so many volunteers for large events?
    - We pay people! We offer \$15/hour for "contractors" to attend the waste stations, the cost of labor is incorporated into the proposal for the event.
  - Are any of you incorporating reusables into zero waste events?
    - Yes! We prioritize reducing waste & incorporating reusables as our highest priorities, although for events like the Marathon or the Arts Festival it is challenging or impossible
  - How many volunteers does it take to watch over each disposal area during the marathon event?
    - 1 per waste station is typically enough, although depending on size 1 person may attend several stations or we may have 2 per station
  - What do you do about litter during the marathon? Do you pick it up?
    - Yes, we try to manage all waste present to the best of our ability across all of our ZW stations & team
  - o Do you see a high demand for larger music festivals and sporting events looking at zero waste strategies?
    - Yes, absolutely, between stadiums and music vendors, to events like the arts festival and marathon that don't have permanent locations, ZW is attracting a lot of interest
  - How many categories do you sort when doing a waste characterization?
    - A "full" characterization I believe includes around 20 total categories by breaking down types of organics (pre-consumer, post-consumer, recoverable), types of recycling (hard to recycle/recyclable/non-recyclable plastic, paper, cardboard, metals), and types of final disposal / landfill

### Notes: Room 1 - Q&A w/ Speakers

- Questions for Morgan from chat:
  - Have you considered purchasing reusable utensils instead of compostable utensils for events/Are any of you incorporating reusables into zero waste events?
    - Definitely considered! Event planners had interest pre-COVID but not so much now. Greatest challenge for us is how do we manage sanitization/cleaning between events, as well as the storage space as we're a small department
  - How many total staff do you have (students/full time) at UTA?
    - We have over 52,000 students and 14,000 at UT Austin! On the Zero Waste team, we have 2 full time staff coordinators and then currently have 3 part time students who work on the Zero Waste Events team about 10 hours/week each
  - What utensils are UT using that is acceptable to your composter?
    - No specific brands, just look for BPI certification/PLA which is what site accepts
    - Same composter as City of Austin so keeping in alignment with their messaging
    - What about CMA products? UT currently not looking at those since our facility accepts BPI
  - Morgan, you mentioned that your compost hauler charges you for contamination. Is there any sorting on your end before it gets taken off-site?
    - Event planners are responsible for ensuring that there is no contamination in the bag before it goes to the toter. It's challenging to ensure compliance with this so we just emphasize it as much as possible during the training and confirmation email and then we can sometimes do spot audits if we are walking by the event
  - o Is compost campus-wide?
    - We are rolling out paper towel composting in the education & general use buildings, but due to high contamination we don't have much front of house composting. Auxiliaries manage their own waste contracts and some have compost.

### Notes: Room 1 - Q&A w/ Speakers

- Reusables idea: place trays on the top of x-frames for silverware collection
- Discussion about massive-scale Canada Summer Games event what are the starting points?
  - Focus groups, build partnership with educational or service group to be bin monitors

# Notes: Room 2 - Planning & Logistics

- In limbo wanting to be zero waste. How to uplift and encourage but understand that not everyone has the resources to create a Zero Waste event.
- Catering great at being Zero Waste can't keep people from using their own caterer in some events. Ex. might be doing an
  event that is cultural and there are certain caterers brought in for that event and they do their own waste collection they
  don't have the resources for zero waste.
- Have people assigned to help but it can still become too much and still end up with a lot of waste.
- Events checklist idea for events (City of Palo Alto example) each department has their own requirements. Add in zero
  waste requirements on this checklist. Ex. single use water bottles are not permitted for the event. If it is a city run event
  (example), everything must be compostable. Provide consultation ahead of time so those participating know what is
  expected/required.
- Event policy That has language for signage for events
- "Party Packs" "borrowing" of cutlery, cups, bowls and plates that are reusable. Only requirement is that they are returned washed.
- Recycling "requirements" for events. Shared from Dakota County:
   https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/ReportsStudies/solid-waste-master-plan/Documents/EventRequirements.pdf
- (CONT'D ON NEXT SLIDE)

# Notes: Room 2 - Planning & Logistics

- Another link provided: https://www.sustain.ucla.edu/green-events/
- Helping every step of the way (ie. hand holding) vs. giving information and asking them to teach themselves/figure it out. Suggesting to make it as easy as possible for the event planners because the main focus is the event running Zero waste/waste collection is the afterthought so if they are required to do that on their own, they may not do it.
- https://upstreamsolutions.org/reuse-wins-at-events
- Reusables at events. rCup
- https://www.hiccupearth.com/ reusable & returnable cup service. Foreverwear is another one suggested.
- Challenge in finding a reusable cup vendor for hot beverages.
- Zero Waste Schools https://zerowastemarin.org/schools/
- Bulk Water for events. WaterMonster suggested as an option: <u>WaterMonster The Complete Hydration Solution</u>. Another suggestion US Pure Water: <u>U.S. Pure Water Quality Drinking Water | Novato CA (uspurewater.com)</u>. Another suggested company Meet Pat: <u>The World's Smartest Water Stations | Meet PAT</u>. Another suggestion: <u>FloWater | The Modern Water Dispenser: More Than Just a Water Cooler (drinkflowater.com)</u>
- Appealing messaging on social media and with promotion of event.
- Encourage attendees to bring their own cup or for vendors to sell reusable cups.
- (CONT'D ON NEXT SLIDE)

# Notes: Room 2 - Planning & Logistics

- Zero Waste event checklist https://sfenvironment.org/recycling-composting-resources-event-producers
- Reusable dishware checkout program. Ordering system.
- Recycling at Events: Dakota County:
   https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/EducationResources/Events/Pages/default.aspx
- https://www.edmonton.ca/attractions\_events/civic-events-office

### Notes: Room 3 - Bins & Signage

- Multiple people refered to importance of having special signage displayed above the bins.
- Challenge w/ wire frame bins: wind can knock over. Solutions: sand bags, stakes, clipping frames together or proprietary base that frames snap into.
- Storage: convenience of bins that collapse to use less space when not in use. Other option bins that nest in storage.
- Big question= temporary/event bins for high-profile events (look nice but also functionable)
  - $\circ$   $\mathsf{Lin}$  going to check in on "wraps" for bins that may look nice:
- Funnel requests through Facilities services- already part of system

# Notes: Room 4 -Outreach & Engagement

- Victor large special events 100+ attendees streamline for event planners to go through and make recommendation on what type of bins they would need.
- Question: Big events 15,000+ difficult because it requires a lot of manpower
- Recommendation: Preventing non-composting items coming to the event = planning in advance. Takes a lot of coordination.
- Lisa: hire temporary event staff, contract to set them up to have enough time to get enough training
- Leslie Is there a benefit to staff bin monitors?
- We do not want to think about waste and they do not read signage having someone
  there to guide them, doesn't really show that having bin monitors will be work
- Portia No one reads anything but if you change the approach and let them know where to place them, it helps them be more aware

# Notes: Room 4 -Outreach & Engagement

- Llynwen getting students more involved for events and items that are waste free 100% compostable
- Kaylee have a lid so people have extra time to observe which items should go where have visual queues. Composting is harder to manage.
- Different compost regulations depending on Counties
- Stephanie For school districts, what is recommended to monitor bins since they do not have it in the budget to outsource
- Recommendation: schedule shifts for students or PTA to help out or non-profit organizations.
- Alec Coordinating volunteers, make an arrangement with a service group Individual volunteers who represent their group
- Angela Students are required to do volunteer hours, can reach out to them.

# Notes: Room 4 -Outreach & Engagement

- Stephanie the focus should be more on education and inspiring people to be positive and letting them know composting is good – helps the environment.
- Lisa For large events special event permit is required One of the condition is having the weight tags. They do not get back their full deposit if they do not provide them with a weight tag.

- Experiencing changes in which materials are accepted/recycled/composted in terms of serviceware?
  - Julie: Yes keep open communication with haulers, use this as opportunity to move toward using more reusables (start with one event, start small, and expand from there)
  - Alan: No major shifts in materials accepted yet, but could be coming reroute food waste to be turned into animal feed, so no food waste hauling anyway
    - Bring portable utensil washing station on site for reusables avoid disposables entirely?
  - Nicole reusables: on-site caterer defaults to reusables, so when events use them infrastructure for reusables is already there
    - Note that reusables not always best/lowest-waste option if high rate of reusable breakage!
    - Vet caterers through catering showcase that is required to be Zero waste gave opportunity to
      educate caterers & vendors, gave them a reason to have zero-waste options, and included survey
      about their zero-waste strategies (is a resource now available on website University of Michigan)
- Catering
  - Yelp for caterers? rate caterers and zero-waste options (serviceware, etc)

- Events in general
  - Julie (City of Edmonton Canada) permit external organizers to hold events
    - Large events need to deal with their own waste (only have infrastructure to support small events)
    - July 1st legislation coming about reducing single use utensils (given away without asking) only give a fork if they ask for a fork, etc
- What do we consider 'Basic/Minimum' for sustainable events?
  - Alan can't go to zero waste immediately (would love to, but not always realistic)
    - Usually existing garbage cans first step is to pair up those existing cans with recycling containers and make sure every waste/garbage bin has a recycling option beside it
      - Then after a year, added organics bin (third stream) to each station
    - Start introducing messaging before, after, and during events (put waste into correct bins, look for signage), start to introduce banners, signage, promotion that includes info about what Zero Waste means
  - Julie (ZWCC) STARTS WITH CONVERSATIONS basics is really just start talking about it talk with organizers, have that conversation, plan for what you can do, and keep the conversation going

- Event planners vs venue operators there is a difference and they need different info!
  - Need different information
  - Venue operators need contract language, what expectations are reasonable, best practices with vendors FIRST and then share that info with event planners in order to start to standardize what event planners encounter at every venue
    - Link to google form from University of Michigan to help coordinate between event planners and venue operators:
- Waste Bin Monitors
  - University of Michigan:
    - Everyone who volunteers to be a Monitor needs to do Zero Waste training
    - Events with newcomers & larger events require Waste Bin Monitors have one volunteer per waste bin STATION instead of each and every bin
      - TIP: use centralized stations so Monitors can direct people as they approach the waste stations
      - Use of large Flags to mark waste stations so people can see them from far off and head toward them intentionally
  - Oliver's Markets:
    - Less is more fewer bins operate better than more bins

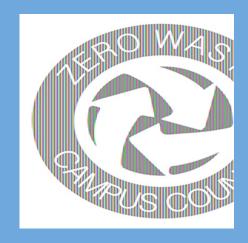
- Kris @ San Miguel County, Colorado:
  - Large music events food diversion
- Special portable bins that are rented/shared as needed or events (stored in between events)?
  - Wire with coloured bags easy to store and transport, clear stream designation
  - Tall and narrow easy to store and stack, low storage footprint

# Closing slides - full group

### Get Involved w/ ZWCC

Monthly "Meet Up, Waste Down"

- Networking event with hot topics and breakout rooms to discuss your real experiences in the field.
- Occurs the last Tuesday of the month.



Sign up for Slack channel:

https://join.slack.com/t/zwcampuscouncil/shared\_invite/zt-1o4e39kwh-zlRw 63HJ05lVLbBbQePskQ

Contact: <a href="mailto:zerowastecampuscouncil@crra.com">zerowastecampuscouncil@crra.com</a>; https://www.crra.com/zwcc-technical-council

Attend <u>California Resource Recovery Association (CRRA)</u> annual conference August 13-16, 2023, Burlingame, CA (just south of San Francisco) for zero waste campus sessions and tours.

# Busch System Webinar Series



#### Recent programs:

- Reuse to Replace Single Use
- Diversion from Venues
- K-12 programs
- Waste Reduction in Healthcare

### Stay tuned:

• Program TBD - Late February

<u>Learn more: buschsystems.com > Webinars</u>

# Share Resources

UT-Austin bin signage template	https://utexas.app.box.com/s/9qzv1j7xfv5e9el48ll4sga7iwgseojy
UT-Austin vendor conversation guide	https://utexas.app.box.com/s/dch3nffiwx86m15uhfx446yqs2x35tvw
**Find additional UT-Austin resources on slide 26	
Reusable packaging hygiene guidelines for events	https://sustainable-event-alliance.org/global-reusables-at-events-hygiene-standard/
Stanford University Zero Waste Events	https://sustainable.stanford.edu/cardinal-green/cardinal-green-events/cardinal-green-events
CET Guidance for Contracting Trash, Recycling & Food Waste Services	https://www.centerforecotechnology.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CT_WFS_Hauler_BMP4.pdf
TRUE Rating System	https://true.gbci.org/sites/default/files/resources/TRUE-Rating-System-2022.pdf
SF Environment Zero Waste Events Checklist	https://sfenvironment.org/sites/default/files/fliers/sfe_zw_events_checklist_september2022.pdf

# Share Resources

Sacramento State- Zero Waste Event Guidelines	https://www.csus.edu/experience/innovation-creativity/sustainability/_internal/zero-waste-event-guidelines1.pdf
Guide to TRUE- Events	https://true.gbci.org/sites/default/files/resources/TRUE%20Technical%20Guidance%20for%20Events.pdf
Seventh Gen. ZW Event planning guide	https://swancc.org/resources/educational-resources/toolkits/ 392-zero-waste-event-guide/file
Swarthmore College Green Events Guide	https://drive.google.com/file/d/18HYBIRI3xB4I1yB2RzAqBK NvDDC0H1Es/view

### Give Us Feedback

Look for email with survey following webinar:

How can we make discussion / info exchange more productive?







UT - Austin



Stanford University (Changing lid colors to blue/green/gray soon)



Northwestern U, zero was station with bus tub to collect reusable utensils



University of Michigan: Convocation Picnic (we reuse boxes as long as possible)



University of Michigan: compostable items @ event attached to reusable a-frame near collection bin



City of Austin- Austin Resource Recovery Compost pilot at Austin New Year event



University of Kentucky

50 gal., signs produced by facilities shop from yard sign material. Used for 600 events / annually. For details, contact Esther Moberly at emoberly@uky.edu



University of Kentucky

Bins used for nicer events.

Metal framed, 50 gallon
capacity. Not easy to
transport between locations

Type Organization's name