

WASTE PREVENTION GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community events can create a lot of waste—but with a little planning, you can make a big difference! By thinking ahead, you'll not only cut down on what ends up in the landfill, but you'll also help your event meet California's waste reduction laws ([AB 2176](#) and [SB 1383](#)).

We've put together some simple guidelines to support your waste-smart planning. Take a look and start checking off the action items about 3–6 months before your event to set yourself up for success.

PRIOR TO EVENT:

- Choose a staff member, contractor, or volunteer to lead your waste reduction and recycling efforts. This person will be the point of contact and make sure all guidelines are followed throughout the event.
- Reach out to South San Francisco Scavenger Company (SSF Scavenger) to set up your event's waste collection plan. Please be prepared to have information prior to contacting:
 - The estimated number of vendors and participants
 - A site map of your event space
 - A list of the types of waste you expect to generate
- Organizers will need to:
 - Make sure your event has plenty of waste stations so it's easy for guests to do the right thing. Each station should include three bins:
 - BLUE** for recyclables
 - GREEN** for compostables
 - GRAY** for landfill
 - Place stations in busy areas—especially near food vendors and spots where lots of trash is created. No one should have to walk more than about 50 yards to find a bin.
 - Arrange to have a cardboard recycling bin for vendors during setup and teardown.



- Put together a team that's the right size to monitor and manage waste collection during your event. Plan a pre-event meeting so the team can review waste station locations, receive instruction on proper waste sorting procedures, and assist in the development of instructional signage for each station. Please be sure to invite a representative from SSF Scavenger to this meeting.

Educational signs for each waste station should make it easy for event participants to tell what belongs in each bin. If possible, signs should feature photos of actual waste items expected at the event. Also, signs should be placed at eye level as well as on each bin. Sample waste station signage can be downloaded [here](#).

- Develop a vendor agreement that clearly outlines requirements for waste reduction and proper waste sorting. Each vendor shall be required to review, acknowledge, and sign the agreement as confirmation that the terms have been read, understood, and will be followed. The specific provisions of the agreement may vary based on the type of event and the nature of the vendor's operations. Appropriate provisions might:

- Prohibit the use of Styrofoam and single-use plastic bags.
- Encourage the sale of foods that do not require utensils and excess packaging. Chicken wings, tacos, egg rolls, and ice cream cones are good examples.
- Require that any disposable service ware that is provided be compliant with the [Disposable Foodware Ordinance](#).
- Ask vendors to give out items like straws and lids only if requested
- Encourage vendors to provide self-serve bulk condiments (ketchup, mustard, etc.) instead of single-use packets.
- Require food vendors to have a plan for handling leftover grease or cooking oil. If they can't take it with them, they'll need to arrange pickup with a permitted collector. Please note: Grease and oil cannot go into the SSF Scavenger collection bins.
- Require the donation of excess edible food after the event.

Large events that either provide or allow for food to be provided must comply with [edible food recovery requirements](#).

- Create marketing material that indicates your event's intention to be green, zero or low waste, or eco-friendly.
- Encourage event participants to bring their own reusable water bottles, straws, utensils, and shopping bags.
- Make arrangements to have a water bottle filling station.

DAY OF EVENT:

- Set up waste stations in a consistent manner.
(for example: garbage in the middle, recycling on the left and organics on the right)
- Regularly monitor waste stations.
The tasks your waste team takes on will depend on how many bins you have and the types in use. They may need to re-sort materials if contamination occurs, empty bins and replace liner bags, carry full bags to larger containers, or switch out full bins for empty ones as needed.
- Photograph waste stations and their contents throughout the event.
- Throughout the event, share quick reminders about the importance of proper waste sorting.
Take the opportunity to also thank participants for doing their part—it helps keep the event clean and green!



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POST EVENT:

- Prepare waste materials and bins for collection by SSF Scavenger
 - Remove any prohibited items from the recyclables and compostables, and place in the garbage. If any hazardous waste or liquid cooking oil/grease is found, set aside and make arrangements to dispose of safely.
Note: SSF Scavenger cannot collect these items.
 - Ensure that the cardboard collection bin contains only clean, dry, flat, corrugated boxes. Direct any food-soiled or wax-coated cardboard to the garbage.
 - Ensure that bins are not overloaded. If additional service is needed, contact SSF Scavenger.
- Create a simple report to document the success of your waste reduction efforts and assist with future event planning.
 - Include your event map, list of services provided by SSF Scavenger, and photos of waste stations.
 - Estimate the volume (in lbs, tons, gallons, or cubic yards) of recyclables, compostables, and garbage collected.
If your event will host more than 2,000 people per day—whether it's ticketed or free and city-sponsored—you'll need to complete and submit an official report to the appropriate city staff member. The form is available at www.ssfscavenger.com/events
- Acknowledge and thank staff and volunteers for their contributions to successful waste diversion efforts.

