

Zero Waste Event Guide

Zero Waste is a philosophy. It is not something you can simply tack onto the end of an event planning process, but something that has to be part of the plan from the very beginning. Knowing that you'd like to make an event zero waste will affect many decisions you make along the way, so switching course at the end of the process is really tough - it will probably end up with waste in the landfill still, while having cost you extra money and stress along the way.

FOOD

Food is a great place to start. If you are serving food at your event, this is the easiest and most obvious place for you to integrate zero waste philosophies into your planning.

China or Disposable? This has got to be the first question you ask around food. The best option is to use reusable items to prevent the creation of waste in the first place. However, most events will default to using disposable materials due to budget, size, or other restrictions. If this is the case for you, we recommend ensuring all of your event waste is compostable. This means being very intentional with every decision you make: for example, using pitchers and cups for drinks instead of cans or bottles or choosing bulk-purchased items served in bowls/plates rather than individually wrapped items.



Your caterer is going to play a major role. Flavors Catering, DU's catering service by Sodexo uses all compostable materials in their catering jobs. This means that going with Sodexo can make it very easy to make your event zero waste. However, we recognize that not all events are catered by Sodexo. When you find a caterer you like, call and ask if they can provide compostable materials with the order. Keep looking until you find one that can, or be prepared to provide your own compostable materials (we'll get to this later).

Don't forget about the servingware! It can be easy to forget about the materials your caterer uses to pack and deliver your food. These are often made of plastics that are not recyclable. You can ask your caterer whether they will reuse the delivery materials, or whether they are recyclable or compostable. This is particularly important if you are choosing to do boxed lunches, as these tend to come with a lot of materials that must go to the landfill. For what it's worth, we recommend trying to find ways to avoid boxed lunches for your event.



Signage is really helpful! While the ideal situation is to remove the "choice" your

