

CITY OFFICE PARTY & EVENT TOOLKIT

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) has developed this guide to help you *reduce plastic and food waste* at office events or gatherings.



PLAN WHAT FOOD IS NEEDED



Ask the caterer if they offer returnable service ware or other low-waste options.

- The City supports [Lake Friendly](#) businesses, which include restaurants where catered food may be sourced from. These restaurants follow “Lake Friendly” [guidelines](#) to prevent the use of single-use plastics and offer environmentally friendly alternatives.



Find out how many guests you will be providing food for. Use [SaveTheFood's](#) online tool to help determine the appropriate amount of food.



Use reusable cups, plates, and utensils when possible and invite attendees to bring their own to cut down on volume whenever possible.



Encourage people to bring to-go containers to take home surplus food that would otherwise be wasted. Consider utilizing [Plastic Free MKE's H2O Refill Program](#) to set up water refilling stations at your event and ask attendees to bring reusable bottles.



DECORATIONS & GIVEAWAYS

Consider reusable or natural items like fabric bunting, table runners or banners, and fresh flowers or paper garlands.

Opting for no swag is the best way to reduce waste, but if it's necessary opt for plastic-free giveaways such as informational literature printed on recycled paper, and in small numbers, or provided digitally (consider asking attendees if they would like printed materials in their RSVP).

Choose reusable giveaways such as plastic-free water bottles, straws, natural fiber tote bags, t-shirts, and bamboo straws.



THROW YOUR PARTY!



If your event is planned in the City Hall Rotunda, clearly state in the application whether food/beverage will be served. This will help the City Operations Team decide how many recycling, compost, and trash receptacles should be present.

Set up recycling, compost, and trash bins and put them together in a place that is easy to access at high traffic zones such as entrances, food areas, and near seating with appropriate signage.

- If your office does not have a compost bin, you can request one through a [Fiix ticket](#) or by contacting the City's Building Operations Supervisor.



Educate guests on best practices for composting and recycling and point them in the right direction of the receptacles.

- Look over this [guide](#) to know what foods can be composted.
- Look over this [guide](#) to know what can be recycled.

Below is an example of announcement that can be made to inform attendees about recycling and composting at the event:

As you enjoy today's event, please help us protect the environment by using the correct receptacles to dispose of waste. Take a moment to follow the signage and place your items in the recycling, compost, or landfill bin.

Every plastic bottle, wrapper, or cup that ends up on the ground has the potential to make its way into our rivers and eventually into Lake Michigan, harming our region's most valuable natural resource.

These small actions make a big difference. By following the signage and disposing of your waste properly, you're helping keep our event clean and doing your part to protect our rivers and Lake Michigan for future generations!

Thank you!



AFTER PARTY CLEAN UP



Recycle any paper, cardboard, empty cans, and bottles.



For any food that cannot be taken home or donated to a local pantry, please use an office compost bin for food scrap collection.