

How to Host Low-Waste Events

By Carla Blackmar Rice

Reusable Dishware

- Serving on reusable dishware (“the real dishes”) is the gold standard for low-waste hosting. This is easier done with a dishwasher, or in a space that is set up for low-waste hosting.



- If you don't have enough of your own dishes to host on reusable dishware, consider asking event attendees to bring their own (BYO). Many people have their own reusable water bottles, plates, etc.-- you simply need to build reminders to BYO into the event publicity.

- If you are doing a BYO reusable event, it can be helpful to have a wash station so people can bring their plates etc. home clean.

Compostable Dishware

The City of Oxford participates in a composting program through GoZero. [Here's information on the program.](#)

Because we have access to commercial composting, we are in a unique position to meaningfully use compostable serviceware. **Compostable serviceware only makes environmental sense if it is composted.** [If you put it in the landfill trash, it's no better than any other disposable product.](#)

Steps to host on Compostables

1. **Make sure the products you are hosting on are compostable.** Both MOON Co-op and Kroger sell compostable products. BPI-certified products are best, but it can be hard to find this labeling when you buy. Additionally, very cheap, uncoated (“flimsy”) paper products like flimsy paper plates and flimsy paper napkins are compostable.

Repurpose compostables at MOON

Upper left corner is compostable



How to Host Low-Waste Events

- 2. If you can make sure that EVERYTHING is compostable, it saves you having to sort trash later.** If you have even one thing that isn't compostable, you'll have to make sure to weed it out of the trash collection, or you'll need to provide folks direction about how to sort stuff out later. If you serve canned soda or drinks, provide a recycling bin (aluminum cans are something most folks understand to be recyclable, not compostable, so this wouldn't be a dealbreaker in terms of sorting as long as labeling is clear on the bins.)
- 3. Make a compost collector.** You will likely be okay without any kind of a trash bag, BUT, if you want to use a trash bag, you'll need to use a compostable trash bag. No bags should go in the compost.



The compostable products and food waste all go together into the compost bin— making life easy.

- 4. After the event, take the compost to the GoZero Bins located at the Tri (6025 Fairfield Rd.) . [Ensure that everything you put in there is food waste or compostable.](#)**



Big Events: Let the City know!

If you are hosting an event that will generate more than a standard trash bin of compost (~35 gallons) (i.e. a pizza party with 10+ boxes, light bites for 200+ people, etc.), please communicate with the City of Oxford in advance. Contact Reena Murphy, Sustainability Coordinator, at 513 524 5234, Rmurphy@cityofoxford.org.