

Palo Alto Zero Waste Event Guidelines

The City of Palo Alto has the goal of Zero Waste (no waste burned or buried) by 2021. In an effort to achieve this goal, the City requires that all special events practice waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting measures.

These guidelines were created to help event organizers plan a Zero Waste event and comply with the City's Recycling and Composting Ordinance. Violators may be denied approval to hold subsequent special events within the City. Additional Zero Waste event information can be found at www.cityofpaloalto.org/zwparty or by calling Zero Waste Palo Alto at 650-496-5910.

Required

- Provide recycle, compost and garbage for event
 - Subscribe to waste collection service sufficient to contain the waste generated by your event.
 - Provide waste stations in convenient locations for recycle, compost, and garbage separation by event employees, vendors, and attendees.
 - No standalone containers are permitted
 - See the Waste Station Guidelines section below for more detail.
 - Remove or cover all public litter cans throughout event area so they can't be used.
- Employ Zero Waste purchasing practices
 - Use reusable, recyclable or compostable containers.
 - [Click here for a detailed list of accepted items](#)
 - Use compostable utensils if utensils are necessary.
 - Provide condiments (e.g., sugar, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing) in bulk instead of in individual packages and servings.
 - Limit single-use water bottles. Note: these bottles are prohibited at City sponsored events.
 - Do not use
 - Plastic bags
 - Expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam™) items
 - Plastic utensils, stir stick or straws
 - Disposable decorations, including balloons
 - Pre-packaged goodie bags or individually wrapped promotional items
- Ensure that the City of Palo Alto's Zero Waste requirements are followed by all your vendors/display table participants.

Highly Suggested

- Let attendees know about your greening efforts in advance and include the information in announcements to attendees.
 - Ask attendees to recycle and compost (describe bins and sample items for each bin).
 - Thank attendees for bringing their own refillable water containers, coffee mugs, cloth napkins, etc.
- Limit the number of handouts and make materials available online

- If you do have handouts and brochures, use ones that are printed in a sustainable manner.
 - Use 100% post-consumer recycled paper.
 - Print on both sides of paper.
 - If documents are printed at a print shop, request soy-based inks.
- Reuse existing signs whenever possible. If you need new signs, select signs made from recyclable or reusable materials.
 - Print banners or signs without dates, so they can be used year after year.
 - If you don't already have a banner and it will only be used once, print paper banners if possible and recycle them when finished. If paper will not work, print banners on cloth instead of vinyl.
 - Print signs on paper core instead of foam core. Foam core cannot be recycled but paper core can.
- Limit promotional items to useful, durable items.
- Sell foods that do not require utensils (e.g., sandwiches, fries, kabobs, egg rolls).
- Provide waste station monitors. See the Waste Station Monitoring section below for more detail.

Ordering Waste Collection Service

Garbage, recycle and compost collection service can be ordered by contacting GreenWaste of Palo Alto at 650-493-4894.

GreenWaste Environmental Outreach Coordinators (EOCs) are available to assist you, at no additional cost. Assistance includes:

- Establishing appropriate service levels;
- Zero Waste planning for special events; and
- Education: on-site trainings and meetings, posters and stickers.

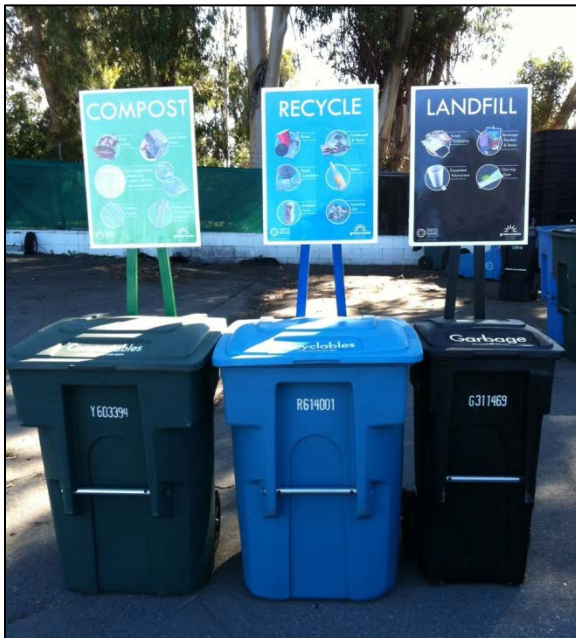
Note: Some events may be eligible to use their own containers instead of ordering Special Event service from GreenWaste of Palo Alto. Alternate containers are acceptable *as long as* waste stations adhere to the Waste Station Guidelines laid out below.

Waste Logistics

- Create a map showing the locations of the central waste collection area(s) and the locations of the waste stations for attendees. (This is **required** as part of the special event permit in the event diagram showing the event's overall layout.)
- Create a central waste collection area(s) with clearly marked bins for vendors and event staff to consolidate waste materials. Depending on the size of your event you may choose to have multiple consolidation locations.
- Supply all vendors with information explaining how and what to recycle and compost, all Zero Waste requirements, and a map showing the central waste collection area(s).
- Remove or cover all public litter cans throughout event area so they can't be used.
- If vendor booths are set up with garbage containers, they must also be equipped with recycle and compost containers.

Waste Station Guidelines

- Recycle, compost and garbage containers must be placed directly beside each other.
- Place containers side-by-side in same order for each station (example: blue, green, black).
- Place waste stations in visible, high traffic areas that do not conflict with the Fire Marshall's requirements (i.e., entrances, exits, bathrooms, etc.).
- Use appropriate signage on all waste station containers. Posters are provided by GreenWaste if you order Special Event service. They are also available to download:
 - [Recycle Poster](#)
 - [Compost Poster](#)
 - [Garbage \(Landfill\) Poster](#)



Example of a Waste Station

Waste Station Monitoring

Arrange to have a person monitor each waste station during the event to assist in educating attendees on what materials go in each container. This will help ensure the event is compliant with the City's Recycling and Composting Ordinance.

There are multiple agencies that can assist your event with monitoring waste stations. A local organization is listed below.

The Palo Alto Downtown Streets Team (DST) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which is a transitional program that teaches participants successful work habits with the goal of re-entering the workforce and building self-esteem. They currently have contracts with the City of Palo Alto to assist with cleanliness and maintenance of the downtown area and soccer fields. For more information regarding costs and how DST might be able to help, call (650) 897-HELP (4357).

The listing above is an example of a vendor that can assist you with waste station monitoring. It does not imply endorsement by the City of Palo Alto.