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***CELEBRATE GREEN! SPECIAL EVENTS  
RESOURCE GUIDE***

A GUIDE TO A ZERO WASTE EVENT

## CELEBRATE GREEN! SPECIAL EVENTS RESOURCE GUIDE

As hosts of events in the Town of Vail, we are committed to the preservation and enhancement of the environment we and our guests enjoy.

This guide provides requirements, strategies, and resources for a Zero Waste Event in the Town of Vail. It shall serve as a tool to further reduce our waste and resource consumption to conserve energy and water, maximize landfill space, minimize ecosystem destruction, and help support our Eagle County community in meeting the goal of 30% waste diversion and 80% diversion of all organic material by 2030.

If you have any questions please contact Beth Markham, Environmental Sustainability Manager, at [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov) or 970-479-2333.

### WHAT IS A ZERO WASTE EVENT?

Hosting a Zero Waste Event is all about doing our part as community members and sustainability stewards. Diverting waste at events is a key component to lowering our carbon footprint and impact on the environment. A Zero Waste Event focuses on diverting as much waste from the landfill through the reduce, reuse and recycle module which includes recycling and composting. This requires eliminating serviceware, promotional materials and decorations that are not compostable, recyclable or reusable. A Zero Waste Event is dedicated to educating the community and attendees on how to divert as much waste from landfill through proper purchasing practices, on-site education through a Zero Waste Team, and proper disposal and removal of every component at the event site.



### WHAT EVENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ZERO WASTE SERVICES?

- ❖ The Town of Vail expects that each event will strive to divert as much material from the landfill as possible. Note that if you have 1 or more food vendors and have received funding from the Town of Vail (Vail Town Council, Commission on Special Events, etc.) to host your event or your event will

have 500 or more attendees with one or more food vendors, you will be required to participate in the Zero Hero Event Program.

- ❖ ALL EVENTS must provide trash and recycling regardless of size.

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## PLANNING A ZERO WASTE EVENT

- ❖ Set a diversion goal for your event. An 80% or higher diversion rate is considered a successful Zero Waste Event.
- ❖ Provide a **DETAILED** [Waste Management Plan](#) for your event. This link can also be found on your Special Events Permit Application.
  - Fill out request for Sorting Station Signage (if applicable).
  - Fill out request for Zero Hero Tents (if applicable).
- ❖ Complete the Celebrate Green! Event Checklist. This list will help guide you through pre-event, during event and post-event requirements.
- ❖ Send the [Vendor Guidelines & Requirements](#) to event vendors, caterers, and concessionaires. Make sure each vendor, caterer and/or concessionaire sends the Serviceware Product Inventory list to either Beth Markham, [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov) or Walking Mountains if they are your hired 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor no later than two weeks prior to your event. Make sure each vendor, caterer and/or concessionaire signs this agreement acknowledging their role in your event's zero waste initiatives and requirements.
- ❖ Establish a Volunteer/Staff Zero Waste Team for the event. Refer to the [Zero Waste Team Training Guide](#) and the [Zero Waste Team Checklist](#) for guidance.
- ❖ Collect the event's total waste diversion rate. If you need assistance calculating these totals, please refer to the [Waste Diversion Calculation Sheet](#).
- ❖ Complete the post-event [Waste Diversion Debrief & Reporting Evaluation](#) and return to Beth Markham, [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov).

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## MINIMIZING WASTE

### Serviceware Guidelines & Requirements

- ❖ It is required that serviceware be compostable (or recyclable if necessary) to decrease the waste entering our local landfill.
- ❖ Please note that while some items may say "recyclable," it does not necessarily mean it is recyclable in our area; please only purchase items on the "acceptable" list.

### Acceptable Containers & Serviceware

- All un-coated paper containers including plates, bowls, cups
- BPI – Certified compostable containers
- BPI – Certified compostable utensils (spoons, forks, knives)
- BPI – Certified compostable cups
- BPI – Certified condiment containers
- Paper napkins and paper towels
- Wax paper or deli wrap
- Aluminum cans
- Corrugated cardboard/boxes
- Aluminum Ball cups
- Durable, reusable products

### Prohibited Containers and Serviceware

- Single-use plastic bottles
- Single-use plastic cups
- Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam™) products
- Non-compostable plastic utensils (including all products made from recycled content)
- Plastic Straws
- Plastic-coated paper products and to-go containers
- Glass
- Plastic wrap
- Plastic lids
- Single-use condiment pouches
- Plastic bags and/or plastic film
- Plastic condiment containers (even if they say recyclable, they are not!)

### ❖ Compostable Serviceware

- All compostable products must be BPI Certified compostable or meet ASTM D6400 compostable standards. Look for these labels:



- Food containers such as plates, bowls, trays, and clamshells must be made of paper, bamboo, or sugarcane and must be BPI Certified compostable to ensure they break down at compost facilities. Note that non-compostable versions are often plastic-lined and are not recyclable or compostable.



- Utensils must be labeled BPI Certified compostable or made from wooden or other natural material. Our local recycling and compost facilities cannot accept utensils made from recycled material/content or simply labeled “biodegradable”.



- Beverage containers such as aluminum cans are accepted for recycling. BPI Certified compostable “plastic” and coffee cups are accepted in the compost and preferred. If possible, consider a reusable cup such as the Ball Cup, Silipint, or Klean Kanteen.



## EVENT & VENDOR COMPLIANCE

The Town of Vail will be implementing a non-compliance fee to event producers whose vendors, caterers, and/or concessionaires do not comply with purchasing requirements for a Zero Waste Event. It is important as an event producer to communicate the requirements and standards for your Zero Waste Event. This guide is a helpful tool for vendors and caterers to review. Make sure to have a written and signed agreement acknowledging their responsible purchasing and practices for your event. If a vendor and/or caterer choose not to comply, the Town of Vail will fine the event producer. In turn, the event producer may find the vendor and/or caterer (this should be written in your agreement). If non-compliance occurs with your event vendors and/or caterers, we ask that event producers report that in a post-event debriefing to the Town of Vail.

### Vendor Purchase Approval

- Event vendors, concessionaires, and caterers (if applicable) are required to provide a product purchase list for approval. Please send list for approval to Beth Markham, [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov) at least two weeks prior to event date.

Item	Product Manufacturer/Brand	Product Description
Ex: to-go container	World Centric	20oz fiber box, BPI certified compostable, <a href="https://store.worldcentric.com/20-oz-fiber-box">https://store.worldcentric.com/20-oz-fiber-box</a>


## SUPPLIERS & PURCHASING RESOURCES

The following suppliers' compostable items have been approved by our local compost facility. If you would like to purchase items from suppliers that are not on this list, you must get it approved by your sustainability coordinator or 3rd party contractor.

- Biodegradable Products Institute:  
<https://products.bpiworld.org/?search=&topcategory=12&type=2>
  - Eco Products: <https://www.ecoproducts.com/>
  - World Centric: <http://www.worldcentric.org/>
  - Greenware: <https://www.fabrikal.com/brands/greenware>
  - Green Paper Products: <https://greenpaperproducts.com/>
  - First Choice Wooden Cutlery: <https://www.firstchoiceware.com/>
  - PURE Compostable Labels: <https://www.purelabels.com/>
  - Webstaurant Store: <http://www.webstaurantstore.com>
- ❖ Note that some of these companies also sell non-compostable items, so please look for the BPI certification.
  - ❖ If you would like to purchase discounted Eco-Products serviceware, please use the Walking Mountains vendor portal: [https://www.zerowasteevents.com/zero\\_waste\\_event.html](https://www.zerowasteevents.com/zero_waste_event.html)
    - Event Code: **GoZeroWaste21**
  - ❖ Reusable Cup/Souvenir options:
    - Klean Kanteen: <https://www.kleankanteen.com>

- Ball Cups: <https://www.ball.com/aluminumcups>
  - Town of Vail has a limited number of 12 oz. Ball Cups to purchase at a subsidized rate. For more information contact Beth Markham at [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov).
- Silipint: <https://silipint.com>



- ❖ A key component to hosting a Zero Waste Event is eliminating single use plastic. This includes eliminating single use plastic water bottle sales. If you plan on selling water at your event, consider aluminum bottle options:

- Proud Source Water: <https://proudsourcewater.com/>
- Mananalu: <https://www.mananalu.com>
- Responsibly Rain: <https://responsiblyrain.com/pages/wholesale>
- Pathwater: <https://drinkpathwater.com/>
- Flowater: <https://home.drinkflowater.com/products/flowater-9-pack>
- Liquid Death Mountain Water: <https://liquiddeath.com/products/12-pack-tallboys>



- ❖ Water refill stations are a great way to eliminate single-use waste at your event! Consider providing water refill stations for your event attendees and encourage attendees to bring empty reusable water bottles.

- Flowater: <https://www.drinkflowater.com/events/>
- Event Water Solutions: <http://www.eventwatersolutions.com/>
- Quench Buggy: <https://quenchbuggy.com/>
- USPW Pure Water: <https://www.uspurewater.com/green-your-festival.html>
- WaterMonster: <https://watermonster.us/>



#### ❖ Purchasing Tips:

- Reduce purchasing and buy in bulk. Not only will it reduce waste and carbon footprint, but it will help cut costs and eliminate the need for unnecessary packaging. Ex: use large condiment containers as opposed to individual packets and try purchasing serveware from the same distributor.
- Avoid single use products like straws, stirrers, unnecessary utensils, or other excess disposable items. These items use large amounts of resources to produce and are a major source of contamination and pollution.
- If you go with paper products, purchase UN-COATED paper plates, cups, boats, etc. Reminder that all serveware must be BPI Certified Compostable label.
- Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) is prohibited at all Town of Vail events. Any Styrofoam packaging or materials must be disposed of offsite.

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## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education is key component in an event's zero waste efforts and success. It is important to educate event staff, volunteers, attendees, and the community.

### Staff and Volunteer Education

- ❖ It is important that your event staff and volunteers (if applicable) are knowledgeable on what goes where with trash, recyclable, and compostable materials. Make sure they know the proper waste procedures and bins for each type.
- ❖ If you are not planning to hire 3<sup>rd</sup> party assistance (Walking Mountains, Honeywagon, etc.), make sure to establish an internal Zero Waste Team (paid staff or volunteers) to help educate, monitor, and track diversion.
  - Zero Waste Team - This can be made up of either your own team (paid or volunteers) or a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor such as Walking Mountains, EverGreen Zero Waste, Honeywagon, etc.
    - Establish your Zero Waste Team prior to your event and make sure each team member is fully educated on the roles and responsibilities prior to, during, and post event. If this team is made up of volunteers, make sure to have a volunteer point person who oversees



volunteer tasks and shift schedule. This checklist can help check off tasks for the Zero Waste Team.

- Determine scope of work for your team. For example:

Set-up/clean-up	How many volunteers will you need for this?
Waste Station Monitor & Education	Make sure to have one monitor who can educate attendees and staff on what goes where at the waste station; compost, recycle, trash
Runner/Floater	Have a few people in charge of bag replacement and checking in on each waste station throughout the event
Waste Recovery	Have a few volunteers at the recovery site to help receive, sort and weigh

◇ Zero Waste Volunteers

- ◆ It is good to send an email or two prior to the event about your event’s zero waste guidelines, sorting information, a venue map, their schedule.
- ◆ Host an orientation/training session prior to the event (this could be the day of) to educate everyone on how to properly sort, educate, monitor, weigh, and record (if hauler is not weighing and recording).
- ◆ This team should be trained to be able to educate vendors, caterers, attendees, and other staff on what goes where when it comes to trash, recycling, and compost.
- ◆ Use the [Zero Waste Team Guide](#) and [Zero Waste Team Checklist](#) for help see zero waste initiatives through for your event.
- ◆ Zero Waste Workstations:
  - Monitored Waste Stations - This is an important piece to your event’s diversion efforts! Make sure each waste station is monitored by a trained volunteer or zero waste staff member. It is highly more efficient for educating throughout the event, the pre-sorting process and avoids less contamination. This person will make sure patrons are placing the proper items in the proper bin to avoid contamination. Include a monitored waste station at the entrance and exit(s) of the event.

- Floater/bag runner – This person(s) will float to each waste station throughout the event taking full bags back to the recovery site and replacing waste bins with the proper color bag.
  - Recovery Site:
    - Receiver – this person(s) will receive the bags the floater brings back to the recover site.
    - Weigher & Recorder- If it is a smaller event, you could measure bags individually. For larger events, it is best to measure in tonnage.
  - ◆ Consider having team members rotate workstations throughout the event between waste bin stations and the back of the house recovery sorting site.
  - Trash, Recycle and Compost Bags
    - ◇ Please make sure each bin is lined with the proper bags. If you are participating in our Zero Hero Program, these bags will be included with the tents and boxes.
  - Education Signage – Make sure each station has the proper signage placed clearly for patrons to see.
    - ◆ It is important to have proper signage on each compost, recycle and trash bin.
    - ◆ If you feel that education signage or any other paper materials need more durability through lamination, make sure they are reusable and not going to waste post event. Remember, laminated paper is not recyclable.
- [Click here](#) for Town of Vail waste bin signage. These can be modified to your event’s specific products or logos. Please email [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov) if you would like an Adobe editable version.



### Attendee & Community Education

- ❖ Marketing is your friend! It is important to engage with your patrons. Make it known to your event goers about your green initiatives through your website, emails, and onsite.
  - Email patrons leading up and post event about your initiatives and reporting.
  - Include initiatives and reporting on your event’s website.
- ❖ Consider having a Sustainability Education Booth at your event.
- ❖ Include zero waste station locations, recovery site locations and water filling stations on your event site map.
- ❖ Make announcements to your attendees throughout your event to inform them about your zero waste initiatives and how they can do their part as attendees.
- ❖ If you have a water filling station, consider having signage explaining the importance of reusable water bottles and plastic-free policy.

### Eco-Friendly Promotional Materials

- ❖ Your promotional materials can be a great opportunity to educate your patrons. Including eco-friendly, reusable products is a great way for patrons to receive fun swag while educating them on the importance of reusable goods.
- ❖ The Town of Vail encourages our partners to eliminate waste-creating “giveaways,” such as stickers and glowsticks; and to consider experiential activities instead. Also consider offering one large giveaway rather than multiple small giveaways. Consider giveaways that are durable and reusable such as:
  - ◇ Drink huggers (Koozies)
  - ◇ Reusable cutlery
  - ◇ Patches
  - ◇ Reusable shopping bags
  - ◇ Reusable event cups/bottles
  - ◇ [Garrett Specialties](#) is a great place to order bulk personalized giveaways.
- ❖ All giveaways should be able to be consumed, reused, recycled, composted, or upcycled and meet the following requirements:
  - Giveaways and their packaging contain recycled materials and are 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable.
  - Giveaways are ordered in reasonable quantities relative to projected event attendance.
  - Giveaways are designed to allow for future distribution should there be leftovers (e.g., does not include a specific date).

## Go Paperless

- Try to cut down paper usage as much as possible. If you need paper materials for your event, such as brochures or signage, make sure the paper is recyclable in a standard municipal recycling stream and is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled content or FSC-Certified content.
- Incorporate QR codes for menus, site maps, schedules, lineups, etc.
- Consider only having e-tickets for your event versus hard copy tickets.
- Keep attendees in the loop via email! Emailing invitations, registrations and event reminders are great ways to eliminate paper waste for your event.

## BINS, HAULERS, & 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY CONTRACTORS

- The Town of Vail can provide Zero Hero Tents, cardboard bins, and trash, recycling, and compost bags upon request for your event. You may provide these details in your Waste Management Plan. Please note that the Town of Vail has a limited supply of Zero Hero Tents, and they may not be available if there are simultaneous events taking place.

### Hauler options:

- [Vail Honeywagon](#)– trash, recycling, and compost
  - 970-476-3511
- [Waste Management](#) – trash and recycling
  - 800-482-6406
- [EverGreen Zero Waste](#) – Compost
  - 970-930-7900
- [Vail Valley Waste](#)
  - 970-977-9228



[Zero Hero Tent](#)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> party hiring options for Zero Waste services:

- [Walking Mountains](#): If contracted by the event producer, the Walking Mountains Sustainability Zero Waste Team (Green Team) will be onsite to help manage and ensure proper disposal of all waste created during the event.
- Vail Honeywagon: Vail Honeywagon is an option that will supply bins, dumpsters, weigh and record waste with an on-site team, set up and monitor ports and sorting stations, and haul waste.
- EverGreen Zero Waste: EverGreen Zero Waste provides zero waste event services and compost services.
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## TRANSPORTATION

**No Idling Policy:** Please communicate a no idling policy to all vendors and attendees. Town of Vail has a 3-minute idling limit per regulation, but please encourage all vendors and attendees to shut their vehicle engines off upon arrival.

**Alternative and Low Impact Transportation:** It is important to encourage attendees to taking alternative means of transportation to your event. Make sure all your site map includes all bus stops, bike valet location and rideshare drop off.

Event attendees can easily plan to attend events in the Town of Vail completely car-free by using transit options such as [Bustang](#) or [Pegasus](#), which can take attendees from Denver Union Station or the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood to the Vail Transportation Center in Vail Village.

If the event is not in Vail Village: Once event attendees arrive, use the [Free Town of Vail Bus](#) or a [Shift Bike \(shift-bike.com\)](#) to get to the event location. Event attendees can reach the event from anywhere in the Vail Valley by taking [ECO Transit](#). Or use local taxi services, as well as Uber and Lyft. Learn more about the many transit options available to get from the Denver metro area to the mountains at [www.Gol70.com/transit](http://www.Gol70.com/transit).

**Pro tip:** If driving from the Front Range, use [Gol70's travel forecast](#) to help plan the best time to travel to avoid weekend traffic!

Use [this document](#) to prepare event specific communications to send to event attendees prior to the event.

### Other suggestions to support car-free and low impact transportation:

- ❖ Mountain Youth free Eco-transit safe ride program: consider partnering for your event <https://www.mountainyouth.org/safedriving>
- ❖ Rideshare: consider partnering with Lyft, Uber, Ride Taxi, Mountain High Taxi, etc. for a safe ride program for your event.
- ❖ Carpooling apps: Treadshare, Caravan
- ❖ Bike Valet: Consider setting up a bike valet for your event.
  - Consider partnering with a local non-profit to run your bike valet.
  - Bike barricades can be rented from the Town of Vail upon request.
- ❖ Shift Bike E-bike share- encourage event goers to *shift their ride* and promote Shift Bike electric bike share as a way to get to and from the event. Work with the Shift Bike team to develop a promo code for your event. Contact Beth Markham for more information at [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov).

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## CARBON OFFSETS

- ❖ Consider partnering with a company to help with carbon offsets for attendees, performing artists, and staff traveling to your event.
  - [The Good Traveler Program](#): purchase carbon credits through Eagle County Airport; proceeds benefit sustainability work happening locally in Eagle County.
  - [TripZero](#) helps accommodate event/festival room blocks for hotels.
  - [Colorado Carbon Fund](#): consider purchasing carbon credits for your attendees

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## WAYS TO REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE

We understand that even when taking the proper procedures to your Zero Waste Event, there can sometimes be extra products that you might not know what to do with. Consider the following to help reduce, reuse and recycle:

- Try not to put dates on event merchandise and/or reusable cups (if applicable). This gives you the option to resell/reuse these products at your next event!
- Consider partnering with Eagle County's Local Food Bank, [The Community Market](#), to donate unused food from event caterer and/or vendors.
- Donate excess merchandise that you cannot reuse.
  - Vail Valley Cares Thrifty Shop
    - Edwards – (970) 926-7134
    - Eagle – (970) 328-1444
- Consider purchasing event décor second hand and reusing for future events.
- *Wastewater* must be disposed of properly into a sanitary sewer system such as a floor sink or mop sink. With an outdoor event, it is prohibited to dump gray water into a storm sewer or directly onto the ground. Outdoor events that do not have the access to a floor or mop sink onsite must transport wastewater to a floor or mop sink. Consider using a gray water tank to transport larger amounts wastewater. This is an efficient way to transport and dispose of wastewater properly.
- *Event Signage*: Consider removing dates from chloroplast signs and vinyl banners for your event so they can be reused. If this poses a challenge for the event, the Town of Vail's Hard to Recycle Events accept chloroplast signs. [Ecologic Designs](#) and [Mile High Workshop](#) vinyl banners to create upcycled products. This could be a good opportunity to create a promotional gift for your next event!
- *Tableware*: For event tableware, it is important to use reusable table linens versus single-use table cloths.

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## DISPOSAL & REMOVAL OF SUPPLIES

- ❖ **Pallet Removal**
  - Eagle County Landfill (Wolcott, CO) will accept Untreated dimensional lumber and pallets may be recycled through the Construction & Demolition Diversion site at the Eagle County Landfill

with prior approval. It costs \$15/ton to recycle here where the wood is chipped and turned into mulch.

- [Pro Pallet Inc](#) (Eaton, CO) will pay for used 48" x 40" hard or softwood pallets and can arrange pickup for larger quantities.
- Organix Supply, LLC (Platteville, CO) accepts pallets and clean used framing lumber. Wood is shredded into mulch and compost. Call ahead for hours and pricing.
- C & C Pallet Remanufacturing, Inc (Commerce City, CO) buys, sells, and repairs wooden pallets
- [Wiley Pallet](#) (Denver, CO) purchases, recycles, and sells pallets
- [48 Forty](#) (Denver, CO) buys and sells pallets
- ❖ **Scrap Metal**
  - Trinity Recycling
    - 970-328-5051
- ❖ **Paint, Metal, Batteries, Bulbs or Electronics Disposal**
  - These materials should be disposed of properly and avoid being sent to landfill.
    - Vail Valley Ace Hardware will take paint, batteries, and bulbs.
      - 970-476-8282
    - Eagle County Household Hazardous Waste will accept batteries, bulbs, electronics, paints, and motor oil.
      - 970-328-3468
    - Sherwin Williams will accept paint.
      - 970-845-0686

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## POST-EVENT REPORTING

- ❖ Please send your final event waste diversion number to Beth Markham, [bmarkham@vail.gov](mailto:bmarkham@vail.gov), once you have calculated it. If you need help on how to calculate your diversion rate, use the [Waste Diversion Calculation Sheet](#).
- ❖ Please fill out the [Zero Waste Event Debrief and Reporting](#) template after your event has acquired the data and takeaways needed. This template allows the event producer to communicate and express the strengths, challenges, and solutions of their sustainability efforts.