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May 2015 EcoFacts



## **SHOW ME HOW - Effective Set Up and Communication at Your Zero Waste Event**

We all want to do the right thing, but with so many products out there, how do we know what goes in which bin? Start by informing your vendors of your Zero Waste goal, and request they bring only materials that can be recycled or composted. Provide concise guidelines on materials that can be used and what will not be acceptable to your vendors/caterers. Provide them with a link to the BPI-Certified compostable food service products [catalog](#).

Remember that "recycled" usually means it was made from recycled materials. This is not the same as "recyclable" which means it is able to be recycled. Also, "biodegradable" just means an item will "break down" (technically, almost any material will break down). This is not the same as "compostable", which means the product must 1) break down to carbon dioxide, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass at a rate similar to paper, 2) disintegrate into small pieces within 90 days, so that the original product is not visually distinguishable in the compost, and 3) leave no toxic residue. <sup>1</sup>

Here are some of the best ways to ensure that event attendees know what to do:

- Create Zero Waste Stations: Always place your trash, recycling and composting containers side by side. Never allow stand-alone trash cans!
- Label every container and use pictures more than words. Better yet, attach examples of the actual materials that will be at the event to your containers.
- Train volunteers to be "waste educators" who will stand by zero waste stations and help people if they are unsure.
- Have event coordinators or emcees announce the zero waste goals of the event at regular intervals during the event, and make sure your waste educators are easy to spot

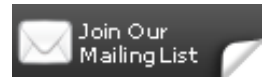


ASTM D6868 - 11 Standard Specification for Labeling of End Items that Incorporate Plastics and Polymers as Coatings or Additives with Paper and Other Substrates Designed to be Aerobically Composted in Municipal or Industrial Facilities; ASTM International; <http://www.astm.org/Standards/D6868.htm>; Retrieved April 27, 2012.

Visit [www.wastecapne.org](http://www.wastecapne.org) for all the information you need for recycling in Nebraska.



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