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May 2015 EcoFacts



Details, Details, Details

As an event organizer, part of your job will be to contact recycling and composting companies to make sure they can process all the items your event will generate. You will need to know which products belong in the recycling bin, the compost bin or the landfill bin. This information will have to be shared with vendors, caterers and attendees so you don't end up with a contaminated mess at the end of the event. Make sure your vendors (and you!) know the difference between recycled (made from recycled products), and recyclable (able to be recycled).

Today, many disposable products are made from multiple materials, and this usually disqualifies them from recycling and composting. Often, disposable paper plates and paper drink cups are coated with plastic. Although paper is perfectly safe to compost, plastic coatings break down into tiny pieces that contaminate compost and ultimately the soil into which it is mixed.

Prepare a set of questions to ask each service provider before committing to one:

1. What materials will you take for recycling?
2. What kind of contamination will disqualify materials from being recycled?
3. How do you want the materials to be collected? Should they be loose or in bags?
4. Will you provide dumpsters or totes?
5. Some permitting requirements may limit the volume or tons that composters can accept. Ask them what, if any limitations they have.
6. Some composters can process meat and dairy, others can't. Some can take plant-based plastics, others can't. Some won't mind paper products, others will. But none of them want plastic contamination!
7. Sometimes hauling prices can be lowered if your service provider can do all the hauling for your event. If they have the ability to haul and process recycling, organics and landfill, they won't lose revenue if your event has a high recycling or composting rate.
8. Be sure to let your service provider(s) know that your goal is zero waste and ask how they can help you achieve this.



Visit www.wastecapne.org for all the information you need for recycling in Nebraska.



WasteCap Nebraska
402-436-2384
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