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May 2015 EcoFacts



What is a Zero Waste Event?

Zero Waste is a goal to emulate natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use. During typical special events, we use tons of products that are designed to be used once and tossed. The problem is that modern landfills are designed as dry tombs to avoid decomposition and leaking, so plastics and even paper goods last virtually forever. Landfills fill up, new ones are sited and they fill up again. Clearly, this process is not sustainable.



Zero Waste event planning ensures that materials used at special events can be recycled or composted. By selecting the right materials, collection bins and processors, we can divert most materials created at special events from the landfill. Thanks to their Zero Waste efforts, Lincoln Earth Day 2015 produced very little waste - less than 40 pounds. Of that, 41% was composted and 25% recycled.

What can you do?

- When attending an event, let the organizers know that you appreciate their recycling efforts, or that you noticed their absence if they were not available.

When planning your next event:

- Require recycling and composting from your venue or event planner, and write it into contracts.
- Use reusable dinnerware, and if reusable is not feasible, use certified compostable materials and a reputable composter. BPI-Certified Compostable Food Service Products can be found [here](#).
- WasteCap Nebraska is here to help you organize your next Zero Waste Event wastecapne.org/zero-waste/events

Policy

Some cities require that events offer recycling and composting. They offer training and signage to help event planners comply with their ordinance. City leadership is important. City government should model zero waste practices and support education to increase recycling and composting.

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



WasteCap Nebraska
402-436-2384
www.WasteCapNE.org



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WasteCap Nebraska | 610 J Street, Suite 300 | Lincoln | NE | 68508