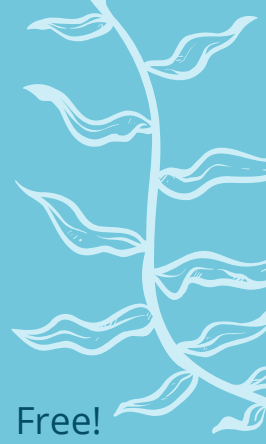


Community Events Toolkit



Dear Community event organizer,

Thank you for taking an interest in making your event Plastic Free! Unfortunately, community events can sometimes be major centers for single-use plastic usage. But, they can also be an incredible way to highlight plastic free efforts, and garner support and awareness from community members for the Plastic Free Movement. Despite variables of size, location, and nature of the event, there are many ways to make your event plastic free. Below are a few ideas to help make your event Plastic Free as well as some organizations that offer unique programs to reduce plastic usage at events.

Food and Supplies:

BEST: Buy Bulk! Check with your local store to see what their “bring your own bulk bag” policies are. Many local co-ops, farmers markets, and grocery stores allow you to bring your own bags/containers to put your bulk groceries in. **BONUS:** Buying bulk and using your own containers not only reduces single-use plastic consumption, but it is typically cheaper than buying pre-packaged foods! If you have an event where vendors will be present, encourage them to buy bulk food supplies when possible.

GOOD: Buy bulk and use paper/compostable bags provided at the store and look for pre-packaged foods with limited packaging (preferably not plastic).

AVOID: Buying pre-packaged or individually wrapped items. When buying bulk, avoid using plastic bags provided to bag up your items.





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Dishware, cups, bottles, utensils:

BEST: If applicable, ask event attendees to bring their own dishes, cups, and utensils or provide reusable items for attendees. **BONUS:** Asking attendees to “BYO” their own foodware can be a fun activity! You can get creative and potentially have a “Most unique plate/mug/etc.” contest! If you have an event where vendors will be present, require them to provide 100% compostable foodware.

GOOD: Have compostable dishware, cups, bottles, and utensils provided.

AVOID: Providing single-use plastic utensils, dishware, cups, etc. When working with food vendors, ask them to not use disposable plastic foodware.

Decorations:

BEST: Utilize community resources to create/gather decorations! San Juan County is the home of many powerhouse artists that also care about their environmental impact. Reach out to the community and see if there are ways that you could use local art as decorations. **BONUS:** With such a strong creative spirit in the islands, art created from trash has become popular! Please reach out to Plastic Free Salish Sea if you are interested in featuring trash art at your event. It is a great way to raise awareness and display community creativity.

GOOD: Use Earth-friendly alternatives (cardboard, bamboo, wood, etc.) to disposable plastic decorations.

AVOID: While disposable decorations such as streamers and balloons may be very appealing to use, please avoid doing so. Decorations are often used once or twice and then end up in landfill, or worse the ocean!





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Water/Drinks:

- BEST:** Provide water or other drinks in bulk containers and ask attendees to bring their own waterbottle/cup or provide reusable/washable cups.
- GOOD:** Provide water or drinks in bulk containers and provide compostable drinkware options.
- AVOID:** Providing single-use plastic water bottles or other drinks.

Waste Management:

- BEST:** Utilize a three bin system with bins for landfill, recycling, and compost. When using this system it is incredibly important to put up clear and informative signage, showing what items go in which bin. The PFSS website has a few printout versions in the “infographics and posters” section. If capacity allows, it can also be useful to have an event volunteer/employee that is standing near the bins to help answer questions and keep things organized. If your event is using a lot of one specific product and/or brand, it could be beneficial to look at TerraCycle (see website for more information).
- GOOD:** Utilize a two bin system if compost is not available (if the event is in San Juan County and you are struggling to find a compost outlet, please reach out to Plastic Free Salish Sea and we may be able to help!). The two bins can be landfill and recycle. Again, adequate signage is important to help folks sort their waste.
- AVOID:** Providing one bin and not sorting recyclables and compost from landfill. Also, if you are using a two or three bin system, please don't forget about informative signage!



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Management & oversight:

While going plastic free can be much easier than most people realize, it can take a bit more pre-planning and organization when coordinating events (compared to non-plastic free events). If possible, having an individual or team of volunteers or organizers in charge of plastic free efforts can streamline the process. These folks can help oversee the planning efforts and can provide management (of the bins, for example) at the event.

Vendors, independent booths, & suppliers:

Distribute an event "values/standards" information page that includes the events Plastic Free Goals to your vendors and suppliers. It is important to set a standard or what you expect of anyone participating in the event, and express how you would like folks to work towards those goals. This can eliminate potential miscommunication and help everyone be on the same page.

Signage & education:

Making your event Plastic Free is a great way to raise awareness about reducing our society's single-use plastic usage. We encourage you to put up signage and integrate educational information into your event. Look at our "Infographics and Posters" for pre-made posters and infographics, or feel free to create your own!





Community Event Specific Resources

Terracycle:

TerraCycle is a social enterprise that is dedicated to eliminating the idea of waste by providing a variety of recycling programs. They are working towards the idea of switching our waste stream from a linear system to a closed-loop (circular) system, and offer a variety of programs, from recycling cigarette butts to candy wrappers. They offer a mixture of free recycling programs and some available for purchase. You can go to their website to find an applicable program, order the box, fill it, and send it back! A great resource for events. To learn more, visit their website here, [terracycle.com](https://www.terracycle.com).

Bye Bye Plastic Supplier Guide:

Bye-Bye Plastic Hello BYO is a campaign that was created by the Better Business Partnership of Australia in 2018. They focus on educating businesses and consumers about the harmful impacts of single-use plastic and how to reduce them in their business model and personal lives. Along with other great resources, they have created a supplier guide that lists businesses and organizations that work towards providing plastic free supplies. While mostly targeting Australians, this is a great guide for anyone looking for sustainable suppliers. To see the guide, please visit their website here, [byebyeplastic.org.au](https://www.byebyeplastic.org.au).

Refill Revolution:

Refill Revolution is a movement first created by the Plastic Pollution Coalition and partners in 2014 at the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival in Manchester, Tennessee. It was first started to encourage festival attendees to reuse and refill stainless steel cups and bottles with beer or water throughout the event. To bring Refill Revolution to your event, simply encourage folks to BYO drinkware (or provide collectable drinkware as part of the event!) to reuse and refill throughout the event. To learn more, visit their website here, www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org/guides-events.

Plastic Free Touring:

If your event is hosting traveling musicians or touring artists, you may want to look into Plastic Free Touring. Plastic Free Touring is another campaign created by the Plastic Pollution Coalition to encourage traveling musicians and touring artists to use easy to use tools for reducing their plastic footprint on the road. To learn more, visit their website here, [plasticpollutioncoalition.org](https://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org).

