

## Green Events Guide

Appalachian State University has a deep commitment to sustainability and is working toward zero waste through thoughtful purchasing decisions and upstream solutions to waste management. Hosting a green event is a way to minimize our impact while educating and leading by example. Thank you for your commitment to greening your event in order to contribute to sustainability on our campus.

### Sustainability Liaison

- Identify someone to be the communicator and representative for your scheduled event.
- Collaborate with the Office of Sustainability to develop a sustainable event plan.
  - Green Events contact: Jennifer Maxwell, Office of Sustainability, maxwelljb@appstate.edu , 262-2667

### Sustainable Planning

- If walking or biking is not an option to attend meetings, meet over online resources.
- If there will be an agenda for your planning meetings, electronically forward it rather than bringing printed copies.
- Appoint your organization a sustainability liaison to ensure that all greening efforts are met.
- Create a budget that incorporates green event practices.
- Educate event staff about zero waste and what the commitment means.
- Why it matters:
  - While organizing an event, it is important to begin reducing waste from the beginning. Greening your meetings is already a step in showing your organization's commitment to sustainability.

### Venue/Location

- Choose a location that minimizes travel for attendee's or pick a venue attendees can walk or bike to.
- Consider holding your event during daylight times to use natural light instead of indoor lighting, or host event outdoors.
- Inform attendees about Appalcart and its schedule.
- Why it matters:
  - When choosing a location, it's important that it allows for alternative transportation, such as walking, biking, taking the bus, and carpooling, so that it allows for higher attendance and decreases the impact of carbon emissions from everyone driving.
  - Hosting locations where natural lighting can be the main source of light, either outside or in locations like the solarium or the Parkway Ballroom, allows for a better light atmosphere or reduces energy.

## Communication and Advertising

- Utilize online resources, electronic advertising/communication.
- If you must advertise via paper and mail, print addresses directly on the envelopes. No labels.
- Where print material is used, purchase 100% post-consumer recycled content paper and state that on the material.
- When you print, print double sided and reduce font size.
- When developing event materials, decorations, signage, design them to be durable and timeless, such that they can be reused (do not list the date, year, etc).
- Advertise the event as a “sustainable event”.
- Why it matters:
  - Today, most events and information are best distributed through social media, and it reduces the amount and cost of printing and producing paper. If you do need to print or have products that have logos, like posters, make them so that they can be used year after year to save on the costs of creating a new one every year.

## Purchasing and Materials

- Use tables, chairs, tents from the university instead of buying new materials.
- Try making signage, banners, etc. to have a general look so that it can be used year after year instead of printing new ones every year.
- When purchasing promotional materials or gifts, choose sustainably made products.
- Avoid using promotional materials like candy, flyers, etc. that can create more waste; rather use products that the attendees can reuse.
- If there are giveaways/door prizes, make them eco-friendly.
- Why it matters:
  - Take advantage of the resources the university offers, like borrowing tables, tents, and chairs to save on event costs.
  - Production costs are one of the most hidden costs from buyers, so look into sustainable products to check the level of impact production has.
  - If there are vendors or you will be handing out items to the attendees, try to order and give out items the attendees can have long term use of, like water bottles, Chico bags, cozies, coffee mugs, etc. rather than disposable things like flyers and candy.

## Sustainable Dining

- Request organic/sustainable & local food.
- Offer special dietary restrictions food options – Gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, sugar-free, lactose-intolerant.
- Serve fruits and vegetables that are in season.
- Participants must register for meals rather than “just show up” – cost and resource minimization.
- If there are leftover foods, donate them to those in need, rather than letting them go to waste.
- Why it matters:
  - Sourcing from local producers, not only provides healthy choices, but it helps build community and support local economy.
  - With any event, it is important to try to meet everyone’s needs, so provide vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free options so that those who have dietary restrictions can still enjoy the event.

## Waste Minimization

- Set up zero waste stations with recycling and composting containers.
- Help guests properly sort their waste and recycling by having zero waste attendants.
- Use reusable plates, glasses, utensils and request bulk service rather than individual items (ex. No individual packets of condiments – sugar/cream/ketchup, etc).
- Do not make single-use water available; offer water in pitchers/communicate water filtration refill stations.
- Promote BYOB – bring your own bottle/coffee mug.
- Why it matters:
  - One of the largest things that is overlooked is waste, but it is vital to every event. Providing zero waste stations that have recycling and compost not only help impact, it brings awareness and allows for alternatives. Make sure you have enough bins and have them easily accessible to participants.
  - Using reusable tableware will not only reduce waste, but cuts down on costs of buying new materials.
  - It is also more cost efficient to buy in bulk for condiments and saves on packaging waste compared to buying individual packets.
  - Using pitchers or guiding attendees to refill stations will reduce the waste and cost of buying water bottles.

## Post Event Efforts

- Have recycle and compost clean-up volunteers to help after an event.
- Work with caterers to donate leftover food to local food coalitions and food banks.
- Double check bins for any contaminants.
- Post and share your accomplishments!