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ECOLOGY NORTH



# COMMUNITY EVENTS SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE

Published by Ecology North, 2021.

With thanks to funding from the Government of Northwest Territories.



Government of  
Northwest Territories

# PLANNING YOUR EVENT

The purpose of this guide is to help event planners minimize waste and maximize sustainability in the planning and execution of their gatherings. It offers suggestions and steps that will help keep waste out landfills while supporting the local economy and ways of life.

## THIS GUIDE CONTAINS IDEAS FOR:

WASTE

WATER

VENUE

FOOD

## WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?



### USE LESS ENERGY

Using less energy results in less greenhouse gas emissions, a large contributor to global warming and climate change.



### SUPPORT LOCAL FOODS

Supporting local harvest grows your community and decreases carbon emissions from food transportation.



### CREATE LESS WASTE

Protect the land, people, water, plants, and wildlife by creating less waste that can seep into the environment.

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Planning sustainable events is a significant action against climate change and a great way to support your community. It's important to encourage environmental awareness and set a good example to lead the way for other groups to do the same.

## VENUE

Consider the venue where your event is taking place. Some facilities are more energy-efficient than others. Consider hosting your event outdoors when suitable and try to use a facility with efficient light and heat systems for indoor events.

### VENUE - SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Prepare a land acknowledgement.
- ☐ Avoid paper handouts, if possible. If you can't, print on recycled paper.
- ☐ Create a site plan with all of your waste bins and water access.



Select a location that is easy to access on foot or on a bike to promote sustainable transportation methods!



## FOOD

Providing local healthy food is good for your community and the environment. Food and drink are often the main sources of waste at an event. Luckily, in the NWT, we can compost or recycle most of our waste.

### FOOD - SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Try your best to source food locally.
- ☐ Buy condiments and beverages in bulk.
- ☐ Use real dishes or ask people to bring their own.
- ☐ Organize dishwashing. Ask for volunteers or pay a student.
- ☐ Invite people to bring containers for leftovers.
- ☐ Donate any extra leftovers to local groups.

#### RENT-A-PLATE

Ecology North is proud to offer a 'rent-a-plate' service for a more sustainable event practice. For more information, contact [admin@ecologynorth.ca](mailto:admin@ecologynorth.ca)





# WASTE MANAGEMENT

It's important to have a great waste management system at your event to not only ensure cleanliness, but to reduce your event's greenhouse gas emissions. Consider how products and services are getting delivered, avoid single use plastics, and reduce paper handouts as much as possible

## WASTE - SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Avoid single use plastics and use products with little or no packaging
- ☐ Separate waste into different bins - Compost, Recycling, and Garbage.
- ☐ Put site specific signs in places that have a certain type of waste.

## WASTE BINS

Separate waste into different bins. Make it easy for people to put waste in the appropriate bin. Using coloured bins with signs and pictures help.

### COMPOST

All food scraps, compostable paper cups, napkins, and plates. Use compostable bags!

### RECYCLING

Beverage containers, and other materials depending on your community.



### GARBAGE

All other waste including styrofoam, plastics, aluminum plates, and any other waste.

## REMINDER

Always check what you can and cannot compost or recycle with your local waste facility.



Avoid plastics with a 'biodegradable' label. In a community compost, it breaks down into smaller pieces of plastic that would have to be removed.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Printable waste bin labels:](#)

<https://ecologynorth.ca/waste-management-resources/>

# WATER

Every year, we use more than 1.3 million water bottles in the NWT. Nearly 200,000 of those become litter or end up in the landfill. It's important for event planners to make events free of plastic water bottles and offer alternatives to reduce our plastic waste.

## #loveNWTwater CAMPAIGN

Check out the #loveNWTwater campaign and take the pledge. The goal is to eliminate single-use plastics and raise awareness about the benefits of using NWT tap water.

Visit [www.lovenwtwater.ca](http://www.lovenwtwater.ca) for more information and additional resources.



## ABOUT NWT WATER

### IT IS SAFE

Tap water has no harmful toxins from plastic packaging. Quality tests are strict and frequent.

### IT IS LOCAL

Community governments invest in water treatment so that everyone can have safe drinking water.

### IT IS CHEAP

Tap water costs less than \$0.01 per litre. Not only is it sustainable, but it is also economical.

## WATER - SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Have tap water easily accessible.
- ☐ Offer alternatives like refillable water jugs.
- ☐ Provide reusable cups and encourage people to bring reusable water bottles.

## OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

- 💧 Use environmentally friendly cleaning products, or choose a cleaning service that uses them.
- 💧 Compensate an Elder to hold a water ceremony and educate more people on traditional sustainable practices on the water and on the land.
- 💧 Promote the protection of water from pollution and waste.



# RESOURCES

## ECOLOGY NORTH

For more information on Ecology North and our program areas, visit [www.ecologynorth.ca](http://www.ecologynorth.ca).

Other Ecology North resources:

### #loveNWTwater

Ecology North's NWT water toolkit  
[www.lovenwtwater.ca](http://www.lovenwtwater.ca)

### Ecology North

Phone: 867-765-5675  
Email: [admin@ecologynorth.ca](mailto:admin@ecologynorth.ca)

## COMPOST & RECYCLING

### NorthBest

Local supplier of compostable materials.  
Phone: 867-873-2364  
[northbest.ca/catalog/index.php](http://northbest.ca/catalog/index.php)

### True Value

Supplier of compostable bags.  
Phone: 867-765-5675  
[truhardware.ca/th/en/index.html](http://truhardware.ca/th/en/index.html)

### Tundra Transfer

Local supplier of compostable materials.  
Phone: 888-669-9330  
Email: [service@tundratransfer.com](mailto:service@tundratransfer.com)  
[tundratransfer.com](http://tundratransfer.com)

## CARBON OFFSETS PROVIDERS

### PlanetAir

Phone: 514-527-2636  
Email: [info@planetair.ca](mailto:info@planetair.ca)  
[planetair.ca/en](http://planetair.ca/en)

### Tree Canada

Phone: 613-567-5545  
Email: [info@treecanada.ca](mailto:info@treecanada.ca)  
[treecanada.ca/en](http://treecanada.ca/en)

## SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES

### Rainbow Coalition of Yellowknife

Phone: 867-444-7295  
Email: [info@rainbowcoalitionyk.org](mailto:info@rainbowcoalitionyk.org)  
[rainbowcoalitionyk.org/resources](http://rainbowcoalitionyk.org/resources)

### NWT Human Rights Commission

Phone: 867-669-5575  
Email: [info@humanrights.ca](mailto:info@humanrights.ca)  
[nwthumanrights.ca/resources](http://nwthumanrights.ca/resources)

### Dene Nahjo

Phone: 867-444-3363  
Email: [contact@denenahjo.com](mailto:contact@denenahjo.com)  
[denenahjo.com](http://denenahjo.com)

## Community Events Sustainability Guide Checklist

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### Venue/Event Planning

- ☐ Prepare a land acknowledgement.
- ☐ Avoid paper handouts, if possible. If you can't, print on recycled paper.
- ☐ Create a site plan with all of your waste bins and water access.

### Food

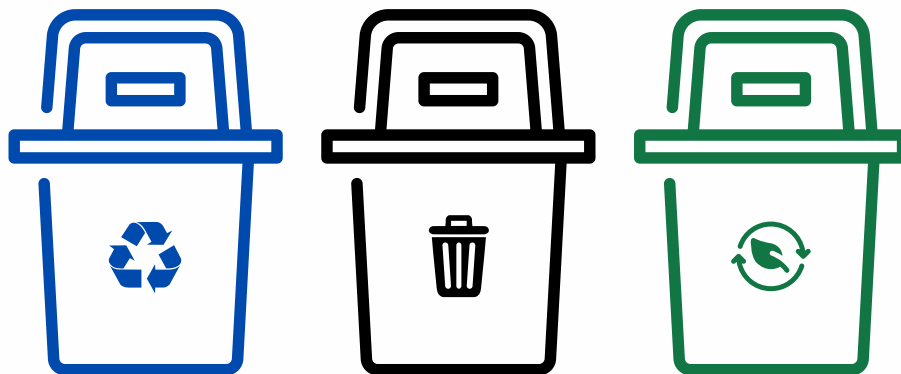
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- ☐ Organize dishwashing. Ask for volunteers or pay a student.
- ☐ Invite people to bring containers for leftovers.
- ☐ Donate any extra leftovers to local groups.

### Waste

- ☐ Avoid single use plastics and use products with little or no packaging
- ☐ Separate waste into different bins - Compost, Recycling, and Garbage.
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### Water

- ☐ Have tap water easily accessible.
- ☐ Offer alternatives like refillable water jugs.
- ☐ Provide reusable cups and encourage people to bring reusable water bottles.



Read the full Community Events Sustainability Guide for more information.



# ECOLOGY NORTH



## CONTACT US

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