

# GREENER GROUNDS

A Guidebook to  
Litter Prevention and  
Waste Management  
at Outdoor Events



PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
BILLY NUNGESSER



Keep  
**LOUISIANA**  
Beautiful  
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE



Additional support from *The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program*

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# INTRODUCTION

Louisiana is home to more than 400 festivals and events annually<sup>1</sup>. Across the region, locals, and tourists come together to celebrate the state's vibrant offerings of food, music, history, and culture. With these events often comes a completely avoidable and solvable issue: litter.

At its simplest, this guidebook reinforces the concept, "Leave it better than you found it." It provides practical ways that you, as an event organizer, can introduce and plan ahead of time on how to manage litter and waste at your event.

Why are litter prevention and waste management important pillars of your event?

- 1) It's your responsibility as an event producer.
- 2) It's the right thing to do for the environment.
- 3) It builds brand equity and community goodwill; successful waste management will reflect positively on your event and organization.

We all love to *laissez les bons temps rouler*, but we must ensure the waste inevitably created by our outdoor events does not threaten our environment. Keeping your site clean not only enhances your attendee's experience but stops the detrimental cycle of mismanaged waste becoming litter that will clog Louisiana's storm drains or enter the waterways, an issue that will ultimately harm the state's coastline, wildlife, and water quality.

"Litter is a huge problem in Louisiana, and we all have a role to play in preventing it," says **Keep Louisiana Beautiful's Executive Director Susan Russell**. "If we all work together and support each other in properly managing waste at our events, we can significantly reduce litter and, at the end of the day, create a more inviting and beautiful Louisiana."

Let's face it: no one wants to damage their organization's reputation or brand by being perceived as the event that tarnishes the beauty of their city. This guide will give you the tools to strengthen your role as an environmentally responsible community partner and be part of the solution to positively impacting litter and waste reduction.

"Festivals and outdoor events are ingrained in Louisiana's culture and communities to *Feed Your Soul*. While we love to throw a party, welcome visitors, and treat everyone like family, this is our home, and it is important to keep our home clean," shares **Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser**. "Let's do everything we can to ensure these traditions can continue for generations by implementing litter prevention practices that help preserve the beauty of Louisiana and *Let Louisiana Shine*."

<sup>1</sup><https://www.explorelouisiana.com/festivals-events-louisiana>

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook and corresponding workbook will be a springboard in determining which tactics suit your outdoor event's approach to minimizing litter and waste. We understand events vary in size, audience, and location, so utilize the information most relevant to your organization's unique needs.

We highly recommend using this guide as a complementary tool to your municipality's waste management requirements and resources as they vary from parish to parish.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Here are some common terms and phrases associated with waste management that you will see throughout this guidebook.

### Litter

Misplaced or unmanaged waste.

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### Stakeholder

An individual or group with a vested interest in your organization that can both affect or be affected by your operations and performance.

Examples of **internal stakeholders** can include investors, sponsors, board members, employees, and volunteers.

Examples of **external stakeholders** can include members of your community, local government, suppliers, vendors, venues, and attendees.

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### Waste Stream(s)

The complete flow of waste from its creation source until its final disposal.

For the purpose of this guide, this term is used in reference to material-based waste streams. The type of material and the destination of the waste are the most commonly used descriptors for each stream. Common waste stream(s) at events include landfill waste, recyclable waste (*plastic, aluminum, paper – collected together or separately*), glass recycling, clothing donation, and composting.

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### Waste Station

The setup constructed for the disposal of waste at your event. Elements include receptacles, bags, and signage. Your waste station's size will depend on how many waste streams you will have.

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### Waste Diversion

Diverting waste from landfills (*a landfill is a dumping ground for traditional waste, i.e., trash*). Also a baseline metric you should be tracking as part of your waste management program.

### Recycle

The process of converting waste materials into new materials and objects.

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### Compost

A method of recycling organic waste which converts the materials into a nutrient-rich soil amendment or mulch through natural decomposition.

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### Low Waste / Zero Waste

The philosophy of diverting as much waste from the landfill by maximizing recycling (*including composting*) efforts and minimizing waste.

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### Front of House (FOH)

All areas of your event that are visible and interacted with by your audience/attendees.

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### Back of House (BOH)

All areas of your event that are behind the scenes for your custodial team, vendors, and suppliers. These zones should be separate from audience/attendee interaction.

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### Vendor

A person(s) or company that provides on-site services and is part of the team that assists with waste management at your event. For example: *the company you employ for your custodial labor or the company you hire for hauling dumpsters*.

---

### Supplier

The person(s) or company you purchase the necessary materials from to implement waste management at your event. For example: *a company that sells trash bags, a company that sells compostable products, or a printer for your signage*.



**SECTION 1**

# **PLANNING & PREPARATION**

## PRE-EVENT ASSESSMENT

This section will walk you through the strategy and processes to develop and implement a litter prevention and waste management program at your outdoor event. **As you read through the Pre-Event Assessment, have your workbook open to complete the corresponding exercise for each step.**

**1**

**EVENT  
EVALUATION**

**2**

**STAKEHOLDER  
ENGAGEMENT**

**3**

**GOAL  
SETTING**

**4**

**LITTER  
PREVENTION  
METHODS &  
WASTE STREAM(S)  
SELECTION**

**5**

**ON-SITE  
PLANNING**

**6**

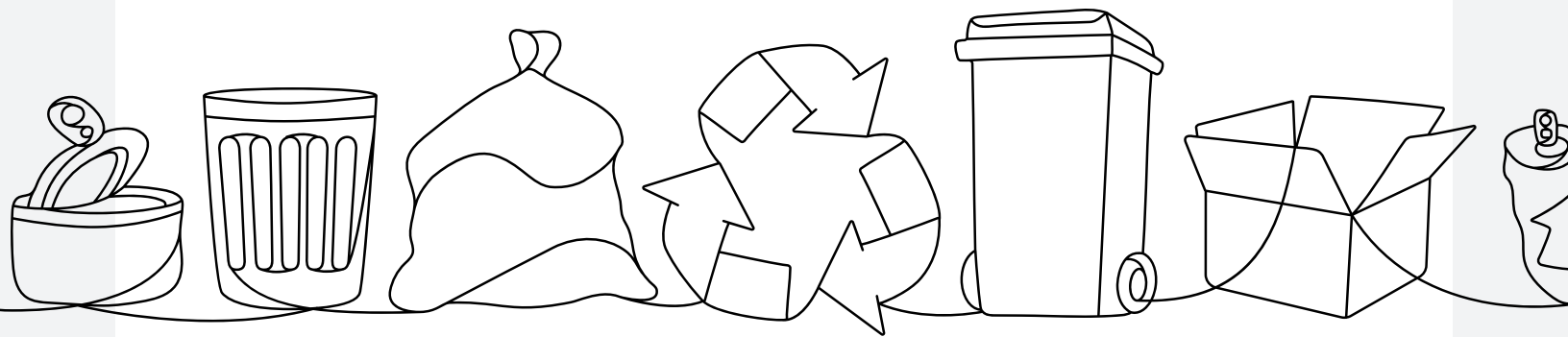
**TEAM  
BUILDOUT**

**7**

**COMMUNICATIONS  
& MARKETING**

**8**

**EXPENSES &  
BUDGETING**



**1**

# EVENT EVALUATION

In this first step, you will observe and note the below parameters to set up your site for success.

## Audience

- **Estimated attendance per day**
- **Behaviors concerning waste**  
What activities will your audience and team be participating in at your event that will create waste?  
For example: *an event with food vendors will inevitably have more food waste. If alcohol is being served, there could be an excessive amount of cups.*

## Venue Considerations

You'll create a full site layout in **Exercise 5: On-Site Planning** in your workbook, but for now, document the following:

- Is it an open or gated event?
- Is there a parking area that will need to be maintained?
- Where will your audience enter and exit?
- What are the limitations of your space?
- What is the flow of your space?  
– *How will your audience and team move through your venue?*
- What material is the ground made of?
- What is the slope of the ground?
- Are there any obstacles?

## Waste Behaviors

Note the following to ensure you choose the appropriate receptacles and waste streams.

- Sources of Waste**  
What areas will create your waste?  
*Examples include:*
- Stages
  - Food Vendors
  - Craft Vendors
  - Floats

- Types of Waste**  
What materials/products does your waste consist of?  
*Examples include:*
- Food and Beverage Products
  - Merchandise
  - Throws
  - Food Scraps
  - Programs and Brochures
  - Credentials

## Existing Waste Practices (if applicable)

Where are you starting? If you have produced this event previously, what tactics are already in place for litter prevention and waste management (both from a venue/layout and producer perspective)? Any key insights?

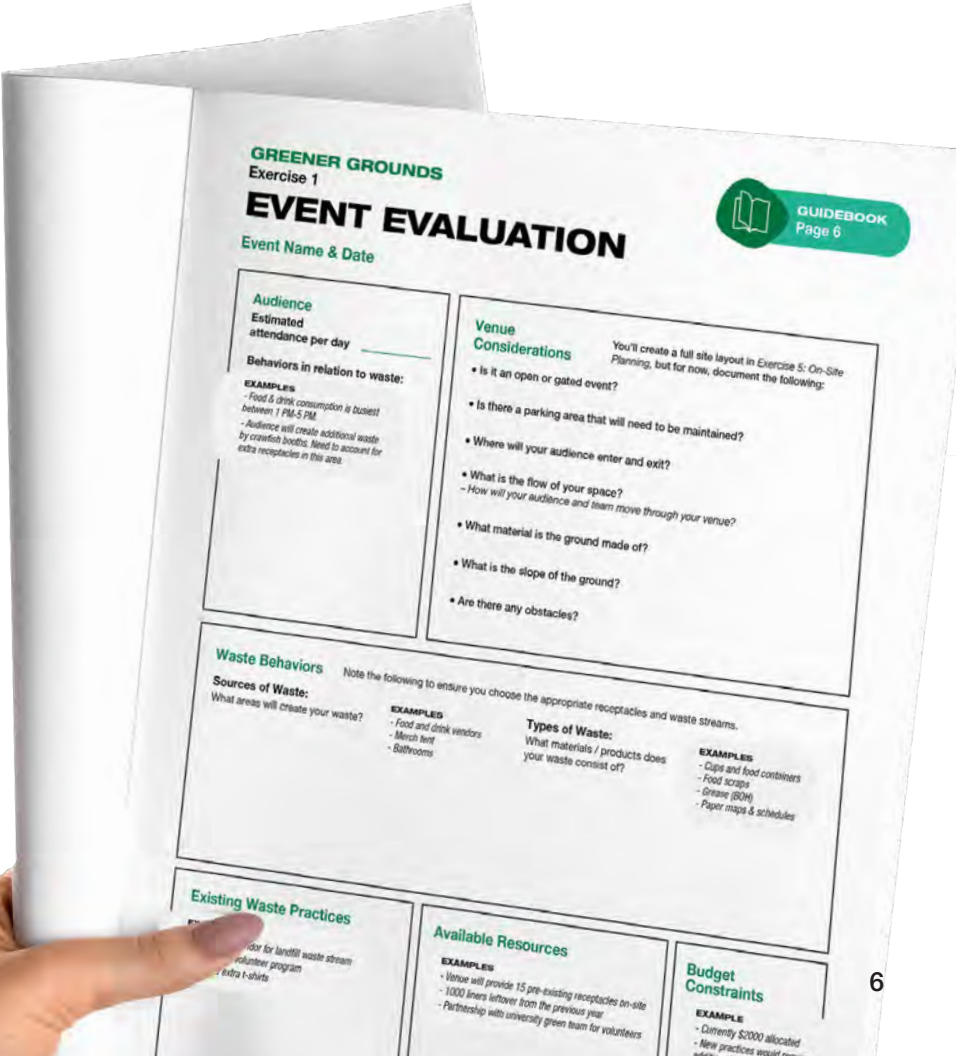
For example: *do you have a waste diversion metric? How many waste streams do you have? How many waste stations do you typically set up?*

## Available Resources

Note any resources available such as venue/site labor and supplies, existing funds, or local government/non-profit assistance.

## Budget Constraints

If you already have a set budget, include the total here. If not, don't worry. By completing the *Pre-Event Assessment Exercises* in your workbook, we'll help you get there!





**2**

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Interspersed throughout this guidebook are insights from community partners across the state who shared their personal experiences in litter prevention and waste management. The biggest takeaway from these conversations with partners is the importance of stakeholders’ commitment in prioritizing, managing, and reducing waste.

Finding success in your efforts starts with strong alignment among internal stakeholders. You have to make a case for why adding a waste reduction program benefits everyone involved. Getting a commitment from your internal team first is key. Once you have their buy-in, building traction with your external stakeholders should be easier, enabling your program to achieve its full potential.

After you’ve identified each group of your stakeholders, use the strategies below to increase buy-in:

**Internal Stakeholders**

*(Investors, sponsors, board members, employees, and volunteers)*

- Collaborate to establish a shared vision of your event’s ideal waste management and litter prevention program
  - Seek input from internal perspectives.
- Identify and communicate the benefits for the event both long term (*i.e., reputational and environmental*) and short term (*i.e., aesthetics and guest experience*)
- Gather commitment to develop the program together
  - Emphasize that year-over-year improvement is the true measure of success – focus on what is attainable, not what seems impossible.
- Keep internal stakeholders informed of changes or issues as they arise
  - Troubleshoot solutions collectively when possible.

**External Stakeholders**

*(Community, government, suppliers, vendors, venues, and attendees)*

**Key Vendors & Suppliers**

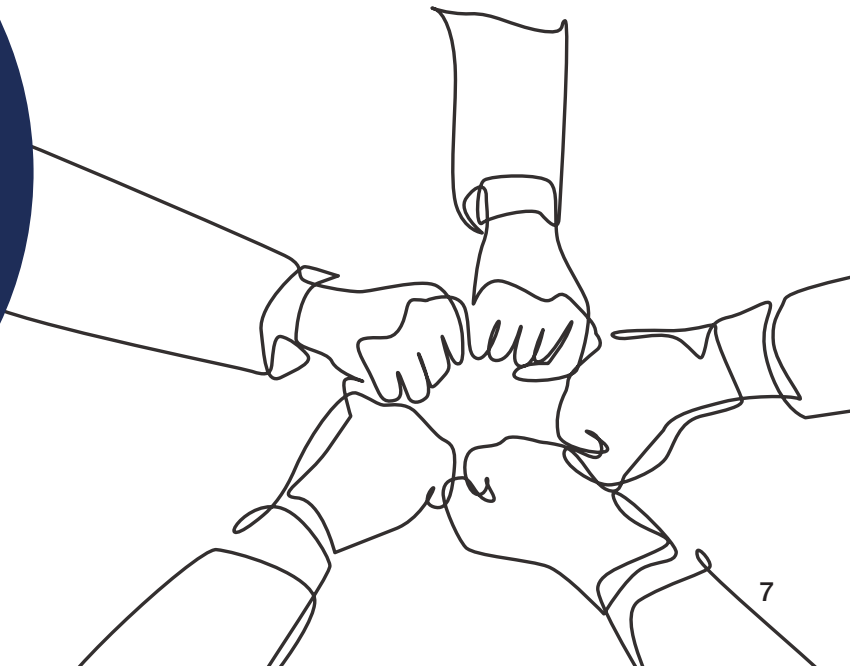
- Set a meeting to discuss the potential needs of your waste program, updates, and any other concerns
- Share the reputational benefits for their brand by participating in your program
- Stress a year-over-year improvement in waste reduction
- Set expectations about where all parties are headed together (*the program will not be possible without them!*)

**Venue & Municipality Leaders**

- Meet with venue owners and town/city representatives to develop a strong relationship
- Determine existing sanitation resources they can provide
- Allow space for feedback from all parties involved

**Audience & General Public**

- Communicate your event’s litter prevention and waste management program and goals through marketing, advertising, and on-site messaging







# 3

## GOAL SETTING

Now that you've evaluated your event and your team is on board, it's time to set your event's litter prevention and waste reduction goal(s). We recommend asking the following questions when thinking about your goal(s):



**Is it attainable?**  
*(even if it's long term)*

**Is it measurable?**  
*(year over year)*

**Is it achievable?**  
*(within budget)*

### Sample Goals ACROSS THE SPECTRUM



### Measuring Progress

As mentioned, your goal ideally incorporates metrics that can be compared year over year. Common examples of these metrics are listed to the right.

We'll touch more on best practices for waste tracking and calculations in *Section 3: Managing Your Event* and *Section 4: Assessing & Improving*.

- **Total # of Pounds of Waste Generated at Your Event**
- **Total # of Waste Stations**
- **Total # of Attendees / Volunteers / Labor / Vendors**
- **Per Person Waste Estimate**  
– Total # of pounds of generated waste divided by the # of attendees
- **Event Waste Diversion Rate**  
– Total # of pounds recycled divided by the total generation of waste

Finding the right goal that fits your program will develop a roadmap for the future of your event's litter prevention and waste management efforts and is key for continuing engagement with your stakeholders.



4

## LITTER PREVENTION METHODS & WASTE STREAM(S) SELECTION

Next is deciding which waste stream(s) you will have at your event. While options can sometimes be limited, you should aim to divert as much waste as possible from the landfill. Use the information in this step to determine what is feasible for your event.

### BACK TO BASICS: THE 3Rs

The methodology behind waste reduction comes down to three principles: Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle.



#### REDUCE

Avoid unnecessary waste and prevent it from entering your site ahead of time. Eliminate what you don't want at your event on the front end.



#### REUSE

Avoid single-use materials. Think about what materials and products can be reused by your attendees during the event or donated afterward.



#### RECYCLE

Try to utilize as many recyclable and compostable materials as possible. You will need to incorporate how recyclable waste can be disposed of in your plan.

### Reduce and Reuse

Minimizing waste from the start not only assists with preventing litter but can play a huge factor in improving waste management efficiency at your event. The more potential waste materials on-site, the more time and money you will spend managing waste for your event. In some cases, recycling may not be available in your area, making the concepts of Reduce and Reuse crucial.

Here are some examples of Reduce and Reuse tactics in action:

#### Examples of Reduce Tactics

- Work with beverage vendors to eliminate straws
- Eliminate excessive product packaging
  - Talk with suppliers, vendors, and krewe members about reducing the amount of packaging brought on-site or along the route by removing it beforehand.
- Go digital for your event by creating an app or using QR codes in place of programs
- Advise food vendors to serve condiments in bulk instead of individual containers
- Integrate a redemption program

#### Examples of Reuse Tactics

- Utilize reusable cups for beverage consumption
- Provide water refill stations to promote the use of reusable water bottles
- Create reusable signage
  - Design signage with perennial use in mind; avoid using the event date.
- Purchase reusable throws for parades or other giveaways
- Invest in reusable equipment
  - For example: *purchasing permanent receptacles rather than disposable.*
- Take old t-shirts (*if you have merchandise*) that are unsuitable for donation and cut them up to be used as cleaning rags
  - Selling the t-shirts to companies that will reuse them is also an option.
- Donate items to reuse in art projects and construction
  - Material examples include toilet paper and paper towel cardboard tubes, containers, unused decorative materials, scrim, vinyl, and signage.
  - Signage made out of coroplast can be recycled to construct parade floats.
- Donate or rescue food
  - Works best with non-perishables or contained and untouched goods.



#### PRO TIP

Many events use redemption or incentivization programs for their attendees to support their litter reduction program by offering a reward (such as merchandise, a free drink, or a ticket upgrade) in exchange for returning a bag of litter or recycling from your site. You can set up an area to provide them with a bag, trash grabber, and safety rules, then send them on their way!

# RECYCLING GUIDE

## for Louisiana Events

Below are common materials found at outdoor events that may be accepted as recyclables throughout the state. As always, double-check with your local municipality and collection services to confirm.

### PLASTICS

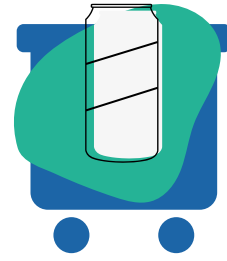


Bottles  
Drink Cups



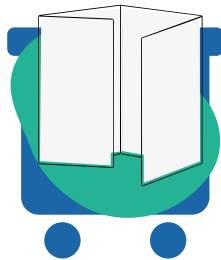
### ALUMINUM

Beverage Cans



### CLEAN PAPER

Programs / Maps  
Brochures / Flyers  
Credentials  
Wristbands  
Signage



### CLEAN CARDBOARD

Beverage  
and Supply  
Packaging  
*(Non-Wax)*



### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Glass recycling is becoming more widely available as an option for events in certain regions of the state (see page 26). Check with your local and surrounding municipalities for availability, or you can also ask bottle distributors in your area if they can repurpose glass. Additionally, throws, including beads from parades, may be possible to recycle in your area (see page 25).

### GLASS

Liquor and  
Wine Bottles  
*(from Back of House (BOH))*



### THROWS

Beads and  
Packaging





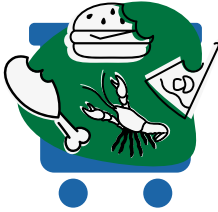
# COMPOSTING GUIDE

## for Louisiana Events

If your plan includes composting as a waste stream, confirm with your composting vendor what materials they accept.

### Always Compostable

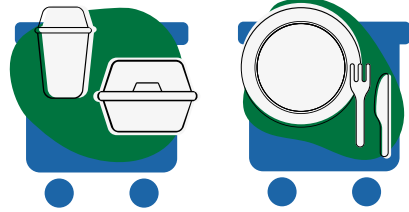
#### FOOD SCRAPS



#### FOOD-SOILED PAPER



#### UNCOATED PAPER, FIBER OR BAMBOO PACKAGING



### Sometimes Compostable

#### CLEAR PLA PRODUCTS



PLA stands for polylactic acid – these products are made from renewables resources such as corn starch or sugar cane

#### COATED COMPOSTABLES



(Non-PFAs)

#### CARDBOARD



### Never Compostable



#### PFA PRODUCTS



#### STYROFOAM



#### PLASTIC & ALUMINIUM

(Please Recycle)

#### What are PFAs?

Many single-use containers are treated with harmful chemicals called PFAs, which are used to make them water or grease-resistant. PFA is short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. PFAs are extremely difficult to break down in the environment, and have been linked to health issues. **It is recommended to avoid products that have been treated with these chemicals.**

## Selecting Your Waste Stream

Now that you've considered your options, you can decide which waste streams will be at your event.

It's important to note that each material you plan to dispose of defines a separate waste stream. For example, a single waste stream could just be landfill, while a double waste stream could be landfill, and aluminum recycling. If you're mixing all of your recyclables, this is considered one waste stream.

## Waste Stream(s) Selection

Which waste stream(s) will you choose for your event? Check all that apply:

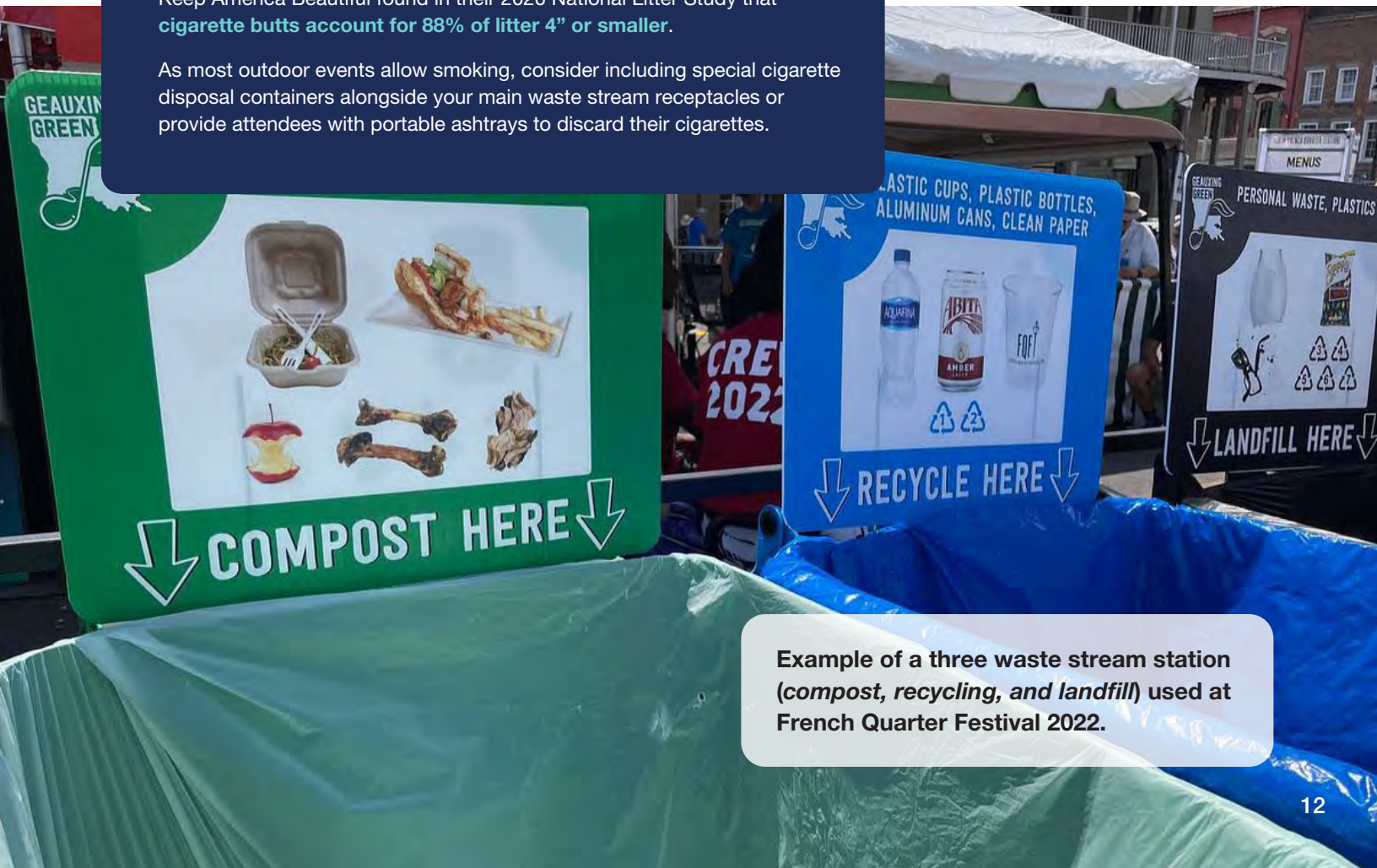
- Landfill  
(Standard waste)
- Recycling  
(Mixed stream)
  - Plastic #1 & #2
  - Aluminum
  - Paper and Cardboard
- Glass Recycling
- Aluminium  
(Single stream)
- Plastic  
(Single stream)
- Materials Donation
- Grease Recycling
- Composting
- Other

## CIGARETTE DISPOSAL

In 2023, Keep Louisiana Beautiful released a Roadside Litter Study that estimated the composition of littered items along Louisiana roadways in order to understand the current conditions, and develop or enhance plans to eliminate the litter that blights the environment.

They found that **cigarettes and tobacco products are the most aggregate littered item on Louisiana's roadways**. Nationally, Keep America Beautiful found in their 2020 National Litter Study that **cigarette butts account for 88% of litter 4" or smaller**.

As most outdoor events allow smoking, consider including special cigarette disposal containers alongside your main waste stream receptacles or provide attendees with portable ashtrays to discard their cigarettes.



Example of a three waste stream station (compost, recycling, and landfill) used at French Quarter Festival 2022.



# 5

## ON-SITE PLANNING

In this section, you'll find best practices for mapping out your waste management setup and gathering the supplies needed for your event.

### Establishing Your Footprint

#### A Determine the placement of your waste stations

Strategize where the most waste will be generated at your event (*i.e.*, high-traffic areas, food and beverage booths, restroom areas, and entrances and exits). Ensure there are clear paths for your team to navigate between waste stations, and to disposal locations, like dumpsters. Additional recommendations include:

- Place your waste stations in high visibility areas to create audience awareness of where they can dispose of their waste
- Create zones for your site to easily assign your labor to waste stations in defined areas at your event
- Account for waste stations in your Back of House (BOH) areas too!
  - Operations headquarters, custodial labor areas, vendor tents, media tents, and backstage.



#### PRO TIP

**If you have multiple waste streams, ensure there are never any standalone receptacles – your receptacles should always be paired together!**

This helps flag the difference in waste materials to your attendees.

#### B Include how many receptacles will be needed at each waste station

Typically you will need one receptacle per waste stream. Keep the number of receptacles you account for on hand when you order your supplies.

#### C Determine the location for Back of House (BOH) disposal

Whether you are disposing of your event's waste yourself or utilizing dumpsters and a hauling vendor to take it away, consider the collection site where you can bring your waste so that it will be out of sight from your audience and easily accessible for removal.

#### D Other components to include:

##### Team area

Where is a good location for your waste management team (*defined in Step 6*) to rest in the shade, eat lunch, and take bathroom breaks?

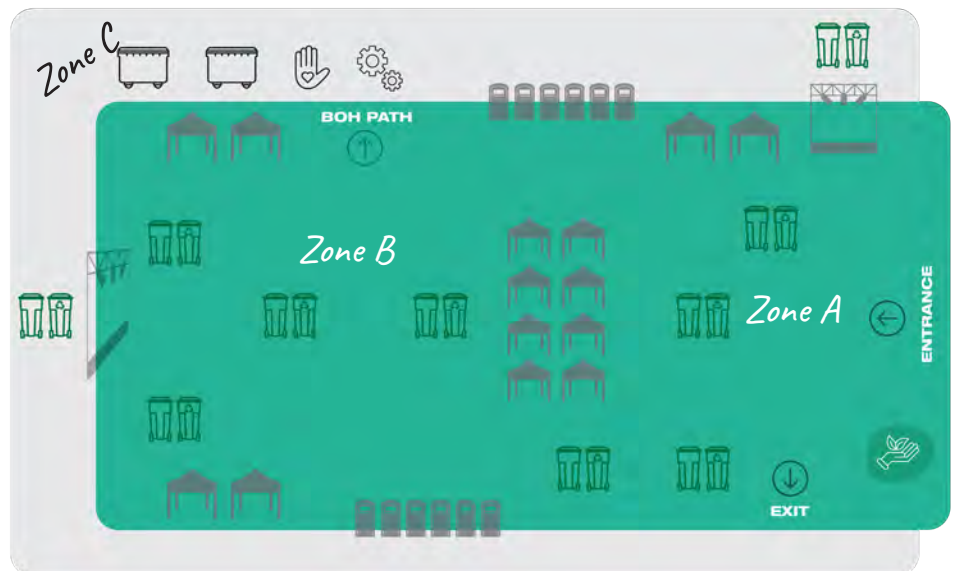
##### Supply area

Where can you house extra supplies like bags, trash pickers, and crew PPE (*personal protective equipment*)?

##### Education area

Do you want a space where your audience can learn more about your litter prevention and waste management program?

EXAMPLE FOOTPRINT OF AN EVENT SITE



- Front of House (FOH) footprint
- Back of House (BOH) footprint
- 🗑️ Waste stations
- 👤 Education area
- 👤 Team area
- 🗑️ Collection site
- ⚙️ Supply area
- 🚽 Bathroom
- 🎪 Stage
- 🏠 Vendor tent



## Building Your Waste Stations

Waste stations come in many forms, shapes, and sizes. Below are the components to consider when selecting which receptacles and bags work best for your waste stream(s).

### Receptacle Types and Considerations

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Note that a larger capacity receptacle is not always the most efficient. Take into consideration where and how your team will have to move waste.

#### Standard Toters or Cans



#### X-Frames

Less sturdy but lighter and cheaper than a standard tote



#### Cardboard / Disposable

Cost-effective but more vulnerable to the weather and wear



#### Drums

Pro-tip: partner with a local car wash company to donate the barrels their soap comes in. You can easily cut off the top to make a receptacle.



### Bag / Liner Considerations

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#### Size

Calculating bag size will be dependent on the size of your receptacle. Examples include:

- 33-45 gallon
- 55 gallon
- 72 gallon
- 96 gallon

#### Thickness

The higher the mil count of a liner, the thicker it will be. There are also high density vs. low density liners. Due to the nature of outdoor events, you will likely utilize low-density liners.

- **High Density**
  - Great for paper and lightweight trash; tears more easily if punctured.
- **Low Density**
  - Great for heavy, wet trash; durable; provides exceptional resistance against puncturing and tearing.

#### Type / Color

Assign a different color to be associated with each of your waste streams.

- Blue
- Black
- Clear
- Compostable

## Waste Station Signage

Communication. Communication. Communication! Contamination could ruin your waste diversion efforts if your attendees are not well-informed about where to place their waste. To avoid this issue, follow the best practices below when developing signage for your waste management program.

### THREE TYPES OF SIGNAGE

#### WAYFINDING

Leads your attendees to the areas **where** they can dispose of their waste

– Can be included both physically on-site and within your app, programs, or maps for your event.

#### DIRECTIONAL

Directs your attendees as to **which** receptacle they should place their waste

#### INFORMATIONAL

Shares with your attendees **why** placing their waste in the correct receptacle matters

### BEST PRACTICES

Assign a different color to be associated with each waste stream

Graphics and pictures of the materials accepted for each waste stream help your attendees visually identify the correct receptacle

Taller signage with eye-catching elements is better for the sake of visibility

Consider your audience – would bilingual messaging help?

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS OF YOUR EVENT AUDIENCE

### Insights from Dr. Jerrod Penn, Professor & Environmental Economist, LSU

Dr. Jerrod Penn is an environmental economist who focuses on understanding individual preferences and behavior at LSU. Penn explained, "Understanding behavior is incredibly useful to improving environmental outcomes. You can use known behavioral biases to get people and society to make better choices...The most famous word associated with this in economics is *nudge*." A *nudge* is an intervention that's created by slightly modifying how a person thinks about making a choice, which tends to increase the rate of the desired outcome in a more cost-effective way.

One of Dr. Penn's recent experiments involved studying how a *nudge* can impact recycling contamination rates on LSU's campus. Currently, LSU's waste stations include signage that showcases what guests SHOULD put in each receptacle. Dr. Penn and his grad students started with a pre-treatment period where they recorded contamination of the waste stations as they were, and the top four waste material contaminants. From there, on a set number of waste stations' existing signage, they added what materials should NOT be disposed of. Dr. Penn and his grad students found there was a 35% reduction in contamination simply by placing the additional signage.

Another instance of behavior analysis at your outdoor event could be monitoring when your waste stations have a volunteer present. If someone is there to give direction as to which materials belong in which waste stream, is there an increase in the likelihood that your attendee will make the right choice and minimize contamination?



#### ASK THE QUESTIONS:

What small changes could you apply to your low-waste efforts to make them work at maximum efficiency?

And what tweaks could you apply day-to-day during your event based on attendee observations?

## Sourcing Materials

You should now have all the information required to begin sourcing and ordering the materials necessary for your event. It is best practice to always round up your supply quantities in case extras are needed.

### WASTE STATION SUPPLIES

Reference your answers in *Exercise 1: Event Evaluation* and *Exercise 5: On-Site Planning* in the workbook to determine the supplies needed for your waste stations. Depending on the waste stream(s) you have at your event, you might order multiple types of each receptacle, bag, and associated signage.

- Receptacles
- Bags / Liners
- Signage

### TEAM SUPPLIES

Supply quantities are based on the number of people on your custodial labor team (both hired and volunteer) on-site at any given time during your event.

- PPE (*personal protective equipment*)
  - Gloves, masks, trash pickers, buckets, eye protection, and sun protection.
- Identification materials
  - Branded shirts, buttons, hats, and credentials.
- Team area tent
- Walkie-talkies or other communication devices for the day of the event
- Snacks and water
  - Make sure everyone is fueled and hydrated!

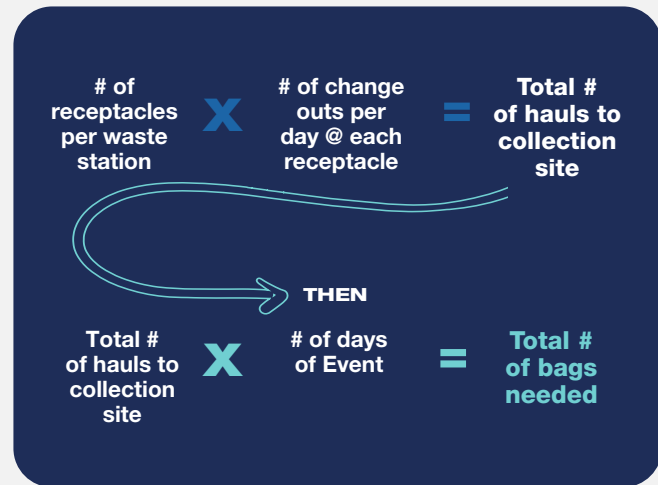
### ADDITIONAL SUPPLY CONSIDERATIONS

- Education tent rental
- Educational materials or additional signage about your litter prevention and waste management program
- Educational vendor signage



### PRO TIP

Use this formula to help determine the number of bags you'll need to order. The number of hauls determined in the first half of the equation is also useful when you begin to create your labor schedule.



### WASTE TRANSPORTATION SUPPLIES

Consider what will be needed by your custodial team to move your waste. Options can include renting or purchasing:

- Hand-trucks
- ATVs or Golf Carts
- Carts (*sometimes known as whales*)
- Trucks







Photo Credit: Cory Fontenot



# 6

## TEAM BUILDOUT

### Components of Your Team

Now it's time to identify how much labor you need to enact your waste management plan. Your team will include four key roles: Waste Supervisor (*this can also be the event producer*), Custodial Labor, Hauling Vendors, and Volunteers. Appropriate training and strong communication across all roles are essential for your team to successfully achieve your litter prevention and waste management goal(s).

### WASTE SUPERVISOR AND/OR EVENT PRODUCER

Accountable for implementing a plan and managing a team to achieve your litter prevention and waste management goal(s).



This person is in charge of direct communication with all vendors, custodial labor, and volunteers. Pre-event onboarding with all parties is a best practice to provide a smoother transition to the day of your event.



### CUSTODIAL LABOR

Responsible for picking up litter, emptying waste stations, and transporting the waste to your collection site.

Your custodial labor can consist of individuals from a vendor, in-house staff, or volunteers. This can be a paid or volunteer role.



### HAULING VENDORS

Tasked with waste removal from the event site.

Often there are different hauling vendors for each of the different waste streams. This is a service that may be provided by your municipality or you might have to hire a private company.

Hauling vendors are in charge of removing and replacing the receptacles your waste is stored in once it's moved to your Back of House (BOH) collection site (i.e., dumpsters or cans).



### VOLUNTEERS

Support all aspects of your waste management plan where additional assistance is needed.

Volunteer duties can include:

- Educating attendees on your waste reduction program
- Placing signage on receptacles and dumpsters
- Manning waste stations and directing attendees to the correct disposal receptacle
- Assisting with the tracking and recording of waste data
- Transporting waste from Front of House (FOH) to Back of House (BOH)
- Sweeping the site for litter with trash pickers



Photo Credit: Klout 9

## RESOURCE AND PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### Volunteer Recruitment

Americorps Louisiana, local rotary clubs, and Keep Louisiana Beautiful affiliate chapters are great resources to contact when searching for volunteers. High schools, colleges, and universities often have clubs focused on sustainability that are also a great option.

### Volunteer Coordination

Lisa Davis led the charge as the volunteer coordinator for French Quarter Festivals, Inc. in 2023. There were obstacles in recruiting for their Geauxing Green team, but she found the tips below helpful along the way.

#### LISA'S ADVICE TO ALL EVENT ORGANIZERS:

**There's only so much time volunteers have to dedicate to organizations, so fostering and nurturing those relationships is important.**

You should ensure they have a great experience, from when they come to the website to when they show up at the event ready to roll to when you're recapping and saying 'thank you' for a successful event. All of these parts collectively create a positive volunteer experience.

**Create a strong, effective communications plan to reach volunteers and be intentional about your engagement.**

You want your message to target and speak to your audience in an informative and festive way. Volunteering is supposed to be fun and fulfilling. I've found that the quickest and easiest tool to communicate with our volunteer base is a newsletter.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are an invaluable and necessary part of your team, but securing them can be challenging when they know they'll be dealing with waste. Focus on outreach to volunteer groups and persons who are motivated by sustainability. You can also incentivize volunteers to sign up for your event through merchandise, free passes, a volunteer-specific party, and special donations from your sponsors.

Volunteer coordination is critical for any event that utilizes a volunteer workforce. Suppose your event relies on a large number of volunteers. In that case, hiring a volunteer coordinator who can significantly offset pressures around recruitment and engagement from the rest of your team may be necessary. Individuals best suited for this role are personable and committed to building community.

Key responsibilities include:

- Recruiting and building your volunteer team
- Creating volunteer tasks, responsibilities, and schedule
- Onboarding and continued ongoing communication with volunteers
- Coordinating volunteers on-site at your event
  - Includes any training and making sure they have all necessary tools and educational materials to complete their volunteer tasks (*i.e., maps, supplies*).
  - Checking in on volunteers throughout the day.
- Ensuring volunteers have a positive experience so they return

Some considerations for building a successful volunteer program are:

- Provide volunteers with an identification marker
  - For example: *t-shirts, hats, buttons, name tags, and credentials*.
- Keep volunteers in pairs – they'll stay motivated and act as a team
- Schedule volunteers in shifts – make sure there is an overlap between the shifts to avoid a gap in personnel
- Factor in shift breaks, time for rest, hydration, and snacks
- Aim to have every Front of House (FOH) waste station supported by a volunteer
- Conduct a post-event volunteer survey



## Custodial Labor and Hauling Vendors

For many events, the custodial labor and hauling vendor roles will be fulfilled by outside companies. It is essential to consistently engage with these members of your team before and during the event so you can address challenges as they arise.

It is also important to provide personnel with details that will inform their role. This may include the site layout, the definition of your waste stream(s), how the removal and disposal process will work, and the required schedule, tools, and PPE (personal protective equipment).

As mentioned, if you've divided your site and waste stations into zones, you can easily assign custodial labor to those areas. Additional guidance includes:

- Create smaller zones to lead to better communication among your team
- Distinguish the pace and create a schedule for how often you want the waste stations emptied
- Ask your custodial labor to monitor the type of waste they're finding in your waste stations (*if they spot high levels of contamination, notify the waste supervisor*).

For hauling vendors in particular, you need to discuss your waste stream(s) and estimated waste generation to decide if a dumpster or other receptacle is necessary (*they can help you determine type, size, and quantity*). You should also establish a pickup schedule. Confirming the contact info for who will be on-site is essential to guarantee your waste is picked up when requested.

If using multiple dumpsters/receptacles at your collection site, ensure they are clearly labeled with what waste they contain (*bilingual signage recommended*) to eliminate confusion and contamination for all team members. Easy access to Back of House (BOH) for both parties is vital.

## Building Your Team

Reference your audience attendance and the number of waste stations you've decided on to determine how much labor you need. By estimating the amount of waste your audience will create, you can determine how many times the receptacles need to be changed out in each of your zones. Take these figures and develop a servicing schedule and staff accordingly.

Additional recommendations when building your team include:

- Aim to have someone from your custodial team (*hired or volunteer*) posted by every station to guide your audience on where to throw away their waste
  - An alternate option is to put a rotation system in place; don't forget to break them into shifts!
- Gather at least (3) three quotes from companies in your area to get the best pricing possible for any custodial labor and hauling vendor hires
  - For hauling vendors – be sure they can provide waste data (*i.e., weight of materials*) so you can utilize it in your post-event reporting.
- Establish good rapport and communication between you and your custodial team's and hauling vendor's point of contact ahead of time





## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

### Define Your Story

Your litter prevention and waste reduction program has fully taken shape. Now it's time to get your partners and audience excited, informed, and ready to partake in reducing waste and keeping the grounds clean at your event. Here are some considerations and questions you could ask yourself to begin developing your story. Think about what attention-grabbing elements from your program will secure a headline (or two!).

#### Identify how familiar your audience will be with the subject

- How much will your audience need to be educated on the topic in advance of sharing your overall event goal? If it's your first time introducing this program, you might need to start with the basics.
- What information can you share ahead of time that will prepare them for your program on-site?

#### Share the motivation behind your program

- Why is it important to your organization?

#### Share your goal

- What is it and how do you hope to achieve it?

#### Share where you are in the process

- Is it your first time implementing a low-waste program?
- Is it the first time an outdoor event in your area has looked to reduce waste?
- If you've enacted your program before, what is new for this year and what are you looking to improve on?

### Get Your Story in Front of Attendees

Below are some options for how to market your story. Make sure you're accessing the right channels to efficiently reach your audience, whether it's social media, PR, traditional advertising, or word of mouth.

- Merge your waste reduction messaging into already existing marketing
- Create a separate standalone campaign
- Develop individual branding for your program
  - A cohesive look and feel across all components will create familiarity with the program for your audience, from online to on-site.
- Utilize earned media or purchase paid media
  - Can include digital (*i.e., social*), traditional (*i.e., press release, print, or TV*), and out-of-home (*OOH*) advertising (*i.e., billboards, bus shelters*).

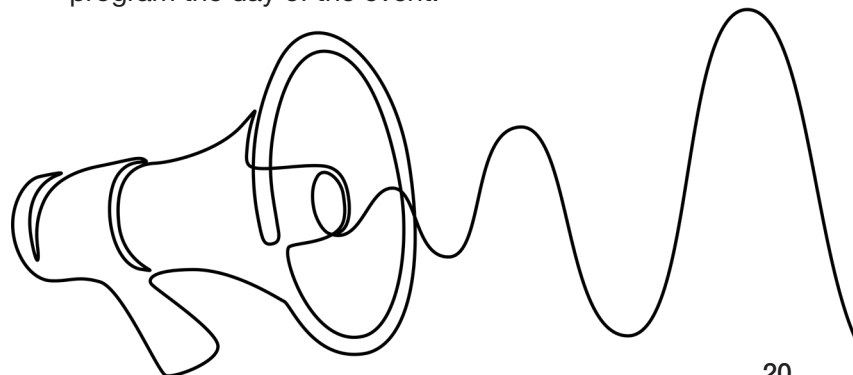
Again, find the options that make the most sense within the scope of your operations, but keep an eye on your calendar! Printers and advertisers need a decent turnaround time to produce your creative assets. Make sure this is built into your timeline leading up to the event.

### On-Site Messaging

Design physical assets such as waste stations and educational signage that can be placed throughout your event. Plan for verbal attendee messaging through means like stage announcements or volunteer education.



If you have an app for your event or have attendees signed up to receive text messages from your organization, push notifications are a great way to remind them how they can help with your program the day of the event.



**8**

**EXPENSES & BUDGETING**

Waste management is an integral part of your event budget; it should be included as an essential line item in your overall operation expenses. At this point, you should have a sense of overall costs broken down into the following categories from your planning in previous steps:

- Supplies Estimate
- Team Buildout Estimate
- Marketing Estimate
- Miscellaneous Costs Estimate

Assess your estimated litter prevention and expense totals for the waste management program. Revisit any budget constraints in your workbook, *Exercise 1: Event Evaluation*, and determine where to save costs.

**Supplemental Funding Options**

Although litter prevention and waste management is your responsibility as an event organizer, we recognize that its implementation can be expensive. There are multiple resources available to help assist with mitigating these costs.

**SPONSORSHIPS**

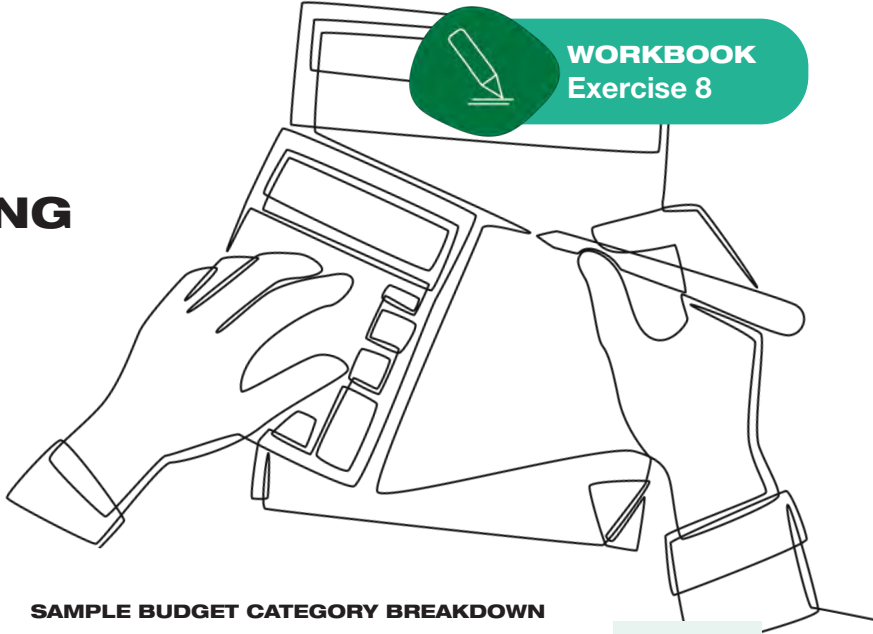
There are many sponsorship opportunities with companies looking to further their green initiatives, and your event could be just the right fit! Examples include a beverage company providing an alternative to a single-use plastic cup for their product or a waste company donating their services in-kind or at a discounted rate.

**GOVERNMENT & NON-PROFIT RESOURCES**

Check and see what local, state, and national government agencies are offering regarding grants for green and recycling efforts that could apply to your event.

**ALUMINIUM CANS AS A REVENUE STREAM**

If your event plans to produce a large amount of aluminum can waste from beverages, the cans could be collected and returned as revenue. As of February 2023, the national average payout for returning discarded aluminum cans was \$.56 per pound.<sup>2</sup>



**SAMPLE BUDGET CATEGORY BREAKDOWN**

<b>Supplies Estimate</b>	\$6,500
<b>Team Buildout Estimate</b>	\$11,800
<b>Marketing Estimate</b>	\$1,000
<b>Miscellaneous Costs Estimate</b>	\$850
<b>Estimated program total cost</b>	<b>\$20,150</b>

**RESOURCES HIGHLIGHT**



**Grant Opportunities**

Organizations such as the EPA (United States Environmental Protection Agency) and Keep Louisiana Beautiful can provide grant money to programs focusing on litter abatement, waste reduction, recycling, and environmental education. Keep an eye out and apply for grants that align with your event's waste prevention goal.

**Bin Loan Programs**

In Lafayette Parish, the Bayou Vermillion District (BVD) has a bin loan program for local festivals and events that can provide up to 80 durable recycle receptacles/bins free of charge. Inquire with your local government offices and environmental non-profits to discover what offerings might be available in your area.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.thepennyhoarder.com/make-money/quick-money/aluminum-can-recycling>





# **PARADES & SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**



# PARADES

Parades are at the heart of Louisiana’s culture but the litter and waste they generate are unsightly and harmful to our environment if left unaddressed. Below are some insights to reducing litter and waste if you’re organizing a parade.

## Working With Local Governments

City leaders and parade organizers continue to forge new partnerships each year to activate more sustainable measures to keep their communities clean. Contact your local officials early in your planning process to learn what rules or resources may already be in place for parades. Here are some sample questions you can ask them to get started:

- Who manages public waste in your municipality?
  - This could be a department within the government, a private company, or a combination of the two.
- Are there ordinances in place already that govern waste management for parades?
  - For example: *prohibiting throws such as paper streamers or other paper products that do not biodegrade when wet.*
- Has the municipality provided waste management services for parades in the past?
  - If so, would they consider providing these services as a donation/sponsorship?
- Are there local community organizations the government works with regarding waste management, volunteer recruitment, land stewardship, or general sustainability that could support your efforts?

## Best Practices for Parade Organizers

- Collect buy-in from all krewe members on your commitment to reducing litter and waste
  - Make it a main topic at membership meetings and include a pledge in membership agreements.
- Focus on sourcing more sustainable, reusable, and easily recyclable throws
  - Limit quantities ordered (*only what is necessary and see if you can find vendors who use minimal packaging*).
- Own your float(s)
  - Not only is your vessel reusable, but you can also incorporate new reduction tactics each year, such as the construction of troughs or hooks for krewe members to hang their beads.
- Assign responsibility to float captains to be litter prevention ambassadors
  - Float captains should continually communicate to their members your krewe's policies and provide the necessary resources for the day of the parade, such as trash bags.
- Adopt a krewe policy to prohibit tossing anything from the floats except for throws along the parade route
  - Arrange for members to remove excess packaging ahead of time or supply ample receptacles at staging areas to collect boxes, bags, and wraps.

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS



The City of West Monroe hosts multiple annual parades, including The Kiwanis of Greater Ouachita Christmas Parade. In addition to the trash cans present year-round, they use city-owned rolling garbage carts on wheels and cardboard receptacles to collect waste downtown during this event. The city is committed to having employees empty receptacles throughout the day and will cover overtime hours for them to be part of the cleanup efforts.



Keep Slidell Beautiful leads their city's Mardi Gras parades on ATVs, encouraging parade-goers to responsibly dispose of their litter by providing items like car trash bags and portable pocket ashtrays. Slidell also recently welcomed the **Krewe of Antheia**, whose members focus on reducing excess waste during their parade. The Krewe has successfully eliminated boxes using Mardi Gras bags, pillowcases, or crawfish sacks to hold throws.



Since Day 1, **Krewe of Muses** has focused on quality throws that parade-goers could use and love year-round. Their ReMUSEable throws range from tea towels to notebooks to their cherished upcycled shoes. The Krewe has also recently started using lobster claw clasps to attach Muses branded medallions to their beaded throws, providing the best of both worlds – a recyclable custom throw that can also be reused by removing the medallion and hooking it to a backpack or purse.

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### Brett Davis, Founder of Grounds Krewe

Grounds Krewe is a non-profit organization that works with festivals and events to implement aluminum can and plastic bottle recycling programs. They have offered recycling and waste reduction consultation to the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and Foundation since 2019 at all of their city-wide free and ticketed festivals. Grounds Krewe has also implemented a specialized X-frame receptacle rental program, so organizers and event venue owners across the city can help capture and divert recyclables at their events.

The organization has several efforts explicitly aimed at Mardi Gras waste reduction. It designed and conducted an on-the-route parade recycling program with the City of New Orleans known as "Recycle DAT" that captured aluminum, glass, and clean parade throws that were then processed and resold by other passionate non-profits like Glass Half Full and ARC GNO. They've also established an interactive recycling marching krewe, the "Trashformers", seen at multiple parades throughout the season.

In 2020, Grounds Krewe launched the "Sustainable Throw Catalog" to meet the growing demand for affordable, sustainable Mardi Gras parade throws that are biodegradable, functional, consumable, or made from recycled materials. The catalog has sold 385,000 eco-friendly throws to date and, in 2023, Grounds Krewe provided branded packages of eco-friendly throws to five parade krewes.



### BRETT'S ADVICE TO ALL EVENT ORGANIZERS:

**Sustainability may not save your festival money, however, it will improve your image and keep it in line with the trend of being a more eco-friendly event.**

Many brands and sponsors only want to work with events implementing waste prevention programs. Your litter prevention and waste reduction efforts can attract the sponsor money needed to offset your costs.

#### Monitor and label your dumpsters!

If the dumpsters at your collection site are unmonitored, you will get contamination, and all of the work you've done in Front of House (FOH) will be lost. You should check if your hauling vendor can provide a dumpster with a closed top vs. an opentop so that your team has to open a door or side entrance to see what waste is inside. By visibly identifying the correct receptacle for your waste, your team could help reduce contamination significantly.

#### Organizers need to focus more on food and drink container re-usability.

Work with your food and beverage vendors in advance to coordinate on using biodegradable or compostable food ware and aluminum beverage container options.



## RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

### The Beauty of Aluminum

Aluminum is an ideal waste stream to have at an event because:

- a) It is infinitely recyclable, and
- b) It can be redeemed for cash by event organizers.

For the 2023 Mardi Gras season, the City of New Orleans developed the Recycle Dat Program, which aimed to repurpose beads, beverage cans, and glass bottles that litter the parade route. Grounds Krewe participated in the program by providing their X-frames to help collect aluminum cans. Once the cans were collected, they were taken to the local metal recycling facility where the Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) agreed to double the value of the recycled cans. Their setup included four recycling hubs and ten can-only receptacles placed at strategic points along the route during the daytime parades that rolled the two weekends prior to Fat Tuesday.

Each point was staffed by volunteers to encourage parade-goers to recycle their cans, and included alternative receptacle approaches such as oversized shopping carts and specially designed backpacks for people to directly insert empty cans. 142,974 used beverage cans (UBCs) were collected and sold generating \$3,854 that was dispersed among three local charities<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.recyclingtoday.com/news/aluminum-beverage-can-recycling-effort-diverts-aluminum-provides-money-for-charity/>

## EXTENDED FOOTPRINT EVENTS

One of the biggest variances for extended footprint events, other than the apparent size difference, is that there usually is no perimeter surrounding the event.

Unlike a gated event where an organizer might have more time to clean up because they're in a controlled environment, it is paramount for extended footprint event organizers to clean up their site immediately to maintain a good relationship with the city and community.

### PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

#### Eric Stuart, Owner and Race Director of the Crescent City Classic

Celebrating its 45th year, the Crescent City Classic is a walking and running event that winds through New Orleans. What's the biggest waste product produced at the event? Water cups.

Before the road race begins, the city conducts a pre-sweep clean to remove any waste that might obstruct the course. The Crescent City Classic owns approximately 100 reusable trash receptacles. They place lined receptacles along every mile marker in conjunction with their water trucks and a group of volunteers. As the runners move through and grab a cup to drink quickly, they often don't take the time to dispose of them properly, and the cups end up on the ground.

Volunteers are equipped with rakes to collect the cups as swiftly as possible from the road without interrupting the race. Then another set of volunteers bags and places the waste in the receptacles.

Crescent City Classic also hires a sanitation crew each year that is present at the starting line. Equipped with trash pickers and bags, the sanitation crew cleans up the area after the release of each corral (runners grouped together based on their varying speeds) so that the site is ready for the next group. After the last group takes off, the crew gathers trucks to follow them and they begin picking up the remaining waste on the ground and at the water stations. Dumpsters are strategically placed along the route for the crew to throw away their bags for a hired hauling vendor to pick up.

Every Sunday post-race, Eric Stuart, the current owner and race director, rides the course to ensure litter is not present. "I don't want to be the event known for leaving waste on the sidewalk," he says, a testament to stakeholder buy-in.



### RESOURCES HIGHLIGHT

#### Bead Donation

The Arc of Louisiana is an organization that promotes and improves support and services for people with developmental disabilities and their families. Below are local Arcs that recycle and repurpose beads. Many organizations have drop-off points that collect beads for Arc during peak Mardi Gras season to ease the donation process.

Arc of Acadiana | Acadiana Region  
Arc of East Ascension | Baton Rouge  
Arc GNO | Greater New Orleans  
Lafourche Arc | Thibodaux

Lafourche Arc | Thibodaux  
LARC | Lafayette  
STARC | St. Tammany Parish  
TARC | Terrebonne Parish





# FOOD & BEVERAGE VENDORS

Food and beverage areas often generate the most waste at an event – from the food and drink to the packaging and containers in which they’re served. It is a must to engage your vendors ahead of time and have them agree to be part of your waste reduction program. Best practices include:

## Mandate

Incorporate language about your waste reduction program requirements into vendor contracts.

## Educate

Provide vendors with a clear and concise one-pager with do's and don'ts for materials used on site. Utilize photos and easy-to-access links to avoid confusion.

## Communicate

Create documents and directly relay in advance how vendors should properly dispose of their waste during your event.

## Reinforce

Work with the marketing and communications team (if applicable) to provide public-facing signage for vendors to post on-site. The materials should communicate their participation in your efforts and how attendees can properly dispose of their waste.

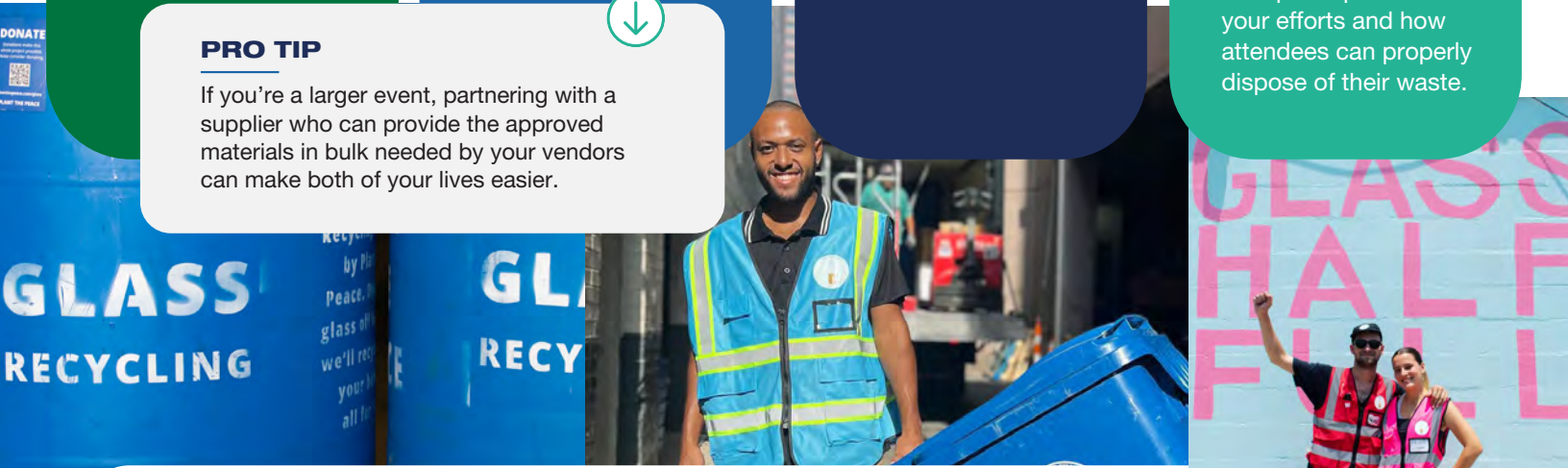
### PRO TIP

If you're a larger event, partnering with a supplier who can provide the approved materials in bulk needed by your vendors can make both of your lives easier.

DONATE  
your extra supplies  
to a local charity  
to help the community

GLASS  
RECYCLING

GLASS  
RECYCLING



## RESOURCE AND PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### What about glass?

Glass is a tricky subject. Overall, you DO NOT want any glass in Front of House (FOH). It is a safety issue that should be avoided at all costs. However, if you have a beverage vendor or bar at your outdoor event that is serving liquor or wine, generating glass waste will be inevitable for Back of House (BOH). Glass is not only reusable but infinitely recyclable, meaning it can be returned to the raw material it was made from with no loss of quality. What reuse, recycling, or other disposal method could you use for glass at your event?

### Glass Half Full

Co-founded by Franziska Trautmann and Max Steitz in 2020, Glass Half Full took on one of New Orleans' biggest waste problems: glass. With no other glass recyclers available in the area, they initially launched a grassroots glass recycling movement in a backyard and have now scaled their operations into a complete processing facility. Their recycling involves converting post-consumer glass into sand products ranging from super soft, beach-like sand to glass gravel. They use these products for projects like coastal restoration and disaster relief.

What's the most significant issue they've had at outdoor events? Franziska noted one word: contamination. "People are having fun and not always paying attention to where waste goes. If you can situate your glass specific recycling receptacles directly next to the bar and out of sight from your attendees, this can help reduce contamination." As they continue expanding their presence throughout the southern region of Louisiana, Franziska says they are open to collaborating with event organizers nationwide on their glass disposal needs or brainstorming alternate solutions!





# SECTION 3



# MANAGING YOUR EVENT

Photo Credit: Klout 9





## EVENT ADVANCEMENT

At this point, you've made it through the most time-intensive part of implementing your waste reduction program. Now we move from preparation into go mode! You'll notice an abundance of to-do lists and checklists in this section. This is our suggested way of arranging the tasks at hand, but as always, implement what works well for you and your organization. Throughout these lists is a recurring theme: the importance of documentation and communication with all vendors and custodial labor involved. Make sure your team is aware of everything you have planned!

### One month prior to event

#### DOCUMENT CREATION

##### Custodial Labor & Hauling Vendor packet

All information about your waste program is located in one place

- Schedule
- Site map
- Waste stream diagram with acceptable materials
- Overall disposal procedures
- Contact list

##### Volunteer packet

- All of the above + a training guide on the event's litter prevention and waste management program

##### Food & Beverage Vendor packet

(if applicable)

- One pager that includes the acceptable materials their product can be served in per the vendor agreement
- Site rules and regulations
  - For example: *how to properly dispose of waste like food scraps, containers, and grease.*
- Site map
  - Simplify to include their route for disposal.
- Waste stream diagram with acceptable materials
- Signage for booth

---

### One week prior to event

#### Touch base with your Custodial Labor and Hauling Vendor(s)

- Distribute their documents
- Confirm schedule
- Conduct a walk-through on-site

#### Touch base with Volunteers

- Host an in-person or virtual meeting

#### Touch base with Food & Beverage Vendors

- Distribute their documents
- Confirm schedule

#### Touch base with Suppliers

- Confirm equipment and deliveries
- Confirm donation pick-up (if applicable)



# WASTE DATA TRACKING & RECORDING

Tracking the amount of waste produced at your event is an absolute must for your waste management program – both to assess where you are starting from and how to plan for the future. The final numbers collected will be utilized in your Post-Event Assessment in the next section to determine your overall Waste Diversion Rate. As touched upon in Section 1, metrics that would be ideal for tracking are:

- **Total # of Pounds of Waste Generated at Your Event**
  - Collect the weight for each stream and then add it together for the total weight.
- **Total # of Waste Stations**
- **Total # of Attendees / Volunteers / Labor / Vendors**
- **Per Person Waste Estimate**
  - Total # of pounds of generated waste divided by # of attendees.

The data that might appear a bit daunting to track at first is the total amount of waste generated. However, you can collect this information in a couple of different ways. If feasible, we recommend gathering the data via both of the methods below.

## Option 1 Tracking On-Site

Assign a member of your custodial labor or volunteer team to count the bags that are being disposed of Back of House (BOH) for each of your waste stream(s) and record. If utilizing dumpsters, another helpful data point is to note how many times they are emptied by your hauling vendor(s).

- You can use the information from the callout box below to assist in converting the quantities of bags, totes, and dumpster hauls into pounds.

## Option 2 Tracking via Your Hauling Vendor

Hauling vendors can often weigh your waste tonnage once it's removed from your site. Request this upon your initial outreach and follow-up post-event for each waste stream(s).

### RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

#### Volume to Weight Conversion

Here are some average weight conversions for waste items commonly found at outdoor events:

**30 Gallon Bag of Litter = ~25 lbs<sup>4</sup>**

**30 Gallon Bag of Uncrushed Aluminum Cans = ~15 lbs<sup>4</sup>**

**30 Gallon Bag of Uncrushed Plastic Bottles = ~5.6 lbs<sup>4</sup>**

**64 Gallon Toter of Glass = ~150-180 lbs<sup>5</sup>**

**55 Gallons of Grease = ~412 lbs<sup>6</sup>**

**64 Gallon Toter of Food Waste = ~150 lbs<sup>6</sup>**

#### Note:

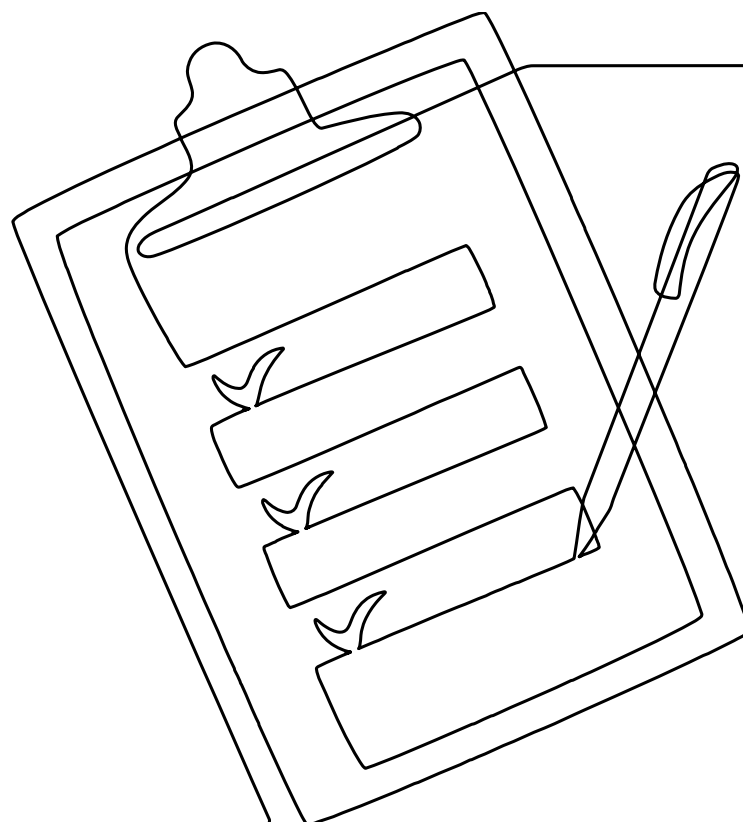
1 Ton = 2,000 lbs

1 cubic yard of litter = six (6) 30-gallon garbage bags or 600 lbs<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Approximate Average Weight of Items Commonly Found and Unit Weight Conversions. (2018, June). KAB.org. <https://keeploouisianabeautiful.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Weight-Conversion-Chart.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>French Quarter Festivals, Inc. estimate based on 2022 average weight for their glass disposal at Satchmo Summerfest

<sup>6</sup>Volume-to-Weight Conversion Factors U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery. (2016, April). Epa.gov. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-04/documentsvolume\\_to\\_weight\\_conversion\\_factors\\_memorandum\\_04192016\\_508fml.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-04/documentsvolume_to_weight_conversion_factors_memorandum_04192016_508fml.pdf)



## Day of Your Event

# EVENT OPERATION

## Build Your Footprint On-Site

Using your site map from *Exercise 5* in your workbook, set up your site as early as possible – ideally a day or two before your event.

- Build your waste stations at their predetermined locations and distribute relevant signage
  - Reminder, if you have multiple waste streams and receptacles, ensure they are always paired together.
- Gather all additional waste station and team supplies in their designated supply area
- Ensure your Back of House (BOH) collection site is set up
  - Confirm the proper receptacles, such as dumpsters, have been dropped off in the correct location.
  - Label with appropriate signage.

## Implement your Day of Event Management Checklist

### OPENING

- Conduct crew meetings with your custodial labor and volunteer team**
  - Make sure everyone has their credentials, shirt, schedule, and that they understand their roles.
- Walkthrough the site and double-check your waste stations**
- Check-in with vendors**
  - Check their compostable products (*if applicable*).
- Have your team in place 20 minutes prior to the event opening**
- Make sure all relevant signage is in place**
- Ensure waste data tracking system is in place**

### MIDDAY

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- Walkthrough site and check in with all vendors**
- Make sure all waste removal schedules are on track**
- Utilize lunchtime to check in with the team**
  - Rotate this shift among your custodial labor and volunteers; consider having a floater.
- Check stations for cleanliness**
- Do rounds to collect information on any issues that are occurring and adapt in real-time**
  - For example: *trash needing to be moved or commonly asked questions by the general public.*
- Ensure litter prevention stage announcements are being made (*if applicable*)**

### CLOSING

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- Conduct a pre-closing meeting an hour or two before your event ends**
  - Discuss closing assignments.
- Check-in with vendors for a final time regarding disposal procedures**
- Conduct a full site walkthrough and “sweep” your site**
  - Line up your custodial labor and volunteers at an arm’s length apart, and equip them with trash bags, trash pickers, and PPE (*personal protective equipment*). Proceed with having them walk forward in unison while scanning the ground for all remaining litter.
- Confirm closing waste pickup from your hauling vendor(s)**
- Collect the waste data recorded throughout the day**
- Do a final inspection of your site**
  - Make sure all trash is out at the end of the night.

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

### Greg Guidroz | Renaissance Man of Recycling

Greg Guidroz has extensive experience with recycling and waste management in the Acadiana region: From being one of many volunteers in the student organization Society for the Promotion of Environmental Action and Knowledge (S.P. E.A.K) at the University of Lafayette in the late 90s; to helping catalyze the re-institution of Festival International de Louisiane's (FIL) recycling program; to grant writer and visionary of the Bayou Vermilion District's recycle bin loan program.

Today he serves as the Recycling Supervisor for Lafayette Consolidated Government while still volunteering with recycling at FIL and Festivals Acadiens et Créoles. Regarding the subject of this guide, he has a passionate wealth of knowledge.

Greg summed up the nature of any event or festival by comparing it to a macro organism. "The central nervous system is the event planners and organizers; the muscles and backbone are the volunteers and donors; the lungs are the musicians; the belly is the food and beverage; and the lymphatic drainage system is the waste removal, one of eleven vital systems of every organism. We love to celebrate our culture..., but for this to continue, every life form has to figure out how to remove waste, retain what's valuable from that waste, and then some other organism takes that waste product and turns it into something else for their lifecycle. For this life experience to maintain itself and continue, we have to clean up, reduce and reuse so we continue living!"

Below are some of his top insights when implementing your event litter prevention and waste management program.

#### PLACING YOUR WASTE STATIONS

**You want to focus your resources where the density is.**

Major traffic areas at your event, and spaces where people are going to be standing for longer periods of time, such as eating or drinking, are considered the higher waste density areas. While resources and waste stations are still necessary, the in-between areas where people are walking are considered less dense as there is more movement and their presence is temporary.

Over the years he researched station designs and came up with a plan that maximized resources by using data collected in a study conducted by Disney. During their experiment they gave patrons candy, and measured how far they walked before throwing away the wrapper; it averaged 25-30 paces or 50 ft. Setup crews use this metric for deploying waste stations in zones where there is a lot of movement, strategically placing them in spots visible from multiple directions and accessible by as many avenues as possible. Stations are located closer in dense areas.

#### LABOR SCHEDULE

**The filling up of your waste stations will follow the biological clock of attendees.**

For your morning crew, give them buckets and pickers to collect any litter present. If the grounds are clean to begin with, people will think twice before discarding what's in their hands. Around 12:30 PM - 3 PM, there is a high probability attendees will be eating if food is served at your event, so by 3:30 PM the waste liners will need to be switched out to avoid receptacles overflowing. The same concept goes for dinner time around 6:00 PM. Each event is different, but making sure stations have enough space to continue collecting waste is key to maintaining a clean event.



Photo Credit: Paul Kieu



**ASSESS  
& IMPROVE**

# POST-EVENT ASSESSMENT

You've made it! Now it's time to review your program and determine what worked, what didn't work, and how you can improve for next time.

Outlined in the Post-Event Assessment are the parameters for assessing your event upon completion. **Review side-by-side with the steps you completed in your Pre-Event Assessment at the beginning of your workbook, revisiting your goal(s) before recording your successes and learnings.**

The waste data you collected during your event will also be utilized here to calculate your Waste Diversion Rate. **Last, but not least, compare your final costs to your original budget so that you have an accurate baseline moving into the next year.**

### WASTE DIVERSION RATE TEMPLATE

Pounds Recycled							Total Pounds Recycled <b>R</b>	Total Pounds Landfilled <b>L</b>
Glass	Plastic	Aluminum	Cardboard/Paper	Organics	Other			
Event Totals								
Total Recycled <b>R</b>			Total Landfilled <b>L</b>			Total Generation <b>G</b>		
_____			_____			_____		
<b>EVENT DIVERSION RATE</b> = $\frac{\text{Total Recycled } R}{\text{Total Generation } G}$							= _____ %	

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT French Quarter Festivals, Inc. (FQFI)

In 2021 French Quarter Festivals, Inc. (FQFI) launched the Geauxing Green Program, a waste reduction and education initiative in partnership with the Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program and funded by the EPA's Gulf Of Mexico Division. Geauxing Green came from the knowledge that producing a large-scale event like the French Quarter Festival creates a lot of waste – most of which is traditionally destined for landfills.



The understanding that landfill runoff plays a significant role in the contamination of waterways in Louisiana motivated organizers to look into minimizing their impact by adding new practices like recycling, composting, and attendee education to reduce overall landfill waste.

Over five festivals and counting, Geauxing Green has been a case study for implementing and adapting a waste management plan in Louisiana. Below are some of the tactics used in the program at the French Quarter Festival and the Satchmo SummerFest:

- Front of House (FOH) sorting stations with three streams: recycling, composting, and landfill spread out over festival grounds
- 60+ food vendors using compostable packaging including serving trays, bowls, plates, utensils, portion cups, and containers
- All beverages are sold in recyclable cups/bottles/ cans or reusable souvenir cups
- Green Team – a volunteer-led sustainability crew to interface with attendees
- Annual advertising and press campaign before and during FQF to raise awareness of the program and encourage sustainable community practices
- Additional Back of House (BOH) Glass Recycling hauling operation of wine and liquor bottles – provided by Glass Half Full
- Efforts to up-cycle all throw-away materials following the festival like t-shirts, chloroplast, etc.

**GEAUXING GREEN PROGRAM GOALS**  
Protect Southeast Louisiana's waterways by reducing the amount of festival waste destined for landfills by 80%.

**Our Commitment:**  
All single-use products at the festival are either recyclable or compostable. "Sanitation Stations" offer composting and recycling available throughout our festival grounds.

**OUTCOMES**

French Quarter Festival Diversion Rate \_\_\_\_\_

**37%** 2022      **40%** 2023

Satchmo SummerFest Diversion Rate \_\_\_\_\_

**28%** 2021      **58%** 2022

## Outcome Sharing

Transparency is key when it comes to sharing the outcomes of your event's litter prevention and waste management program. Look at your achievements (*even the small ones*) and communicate these first with your internal team and stakeholders to maintain rapport and show appreciation for their support.

If you have a marketing and communications department, work with them to develop and distribute the results and narrative you want to share with external stakeholders, media, and the general public. This can be shared through a press release, social posts, and traditional media. You can still be proactive if you do not have a marketing and communications department. It is a good idea also to research local and national media outlets, journalists, and reporters who show special interest in this topic.

## Forward-Thinking

It's never too early to begin planning your future litter prevention and waste management program. To continue onwards and upwards, make sure to:

**CELEBRATE  
THE WINS**

**THANK YOUR  
PARTNERS, TEAM,  
VENDORS, AND  
VOLUNTEERS**

**INCORPORATE  
LESSONS LEARNED  
INTO YOUR  
FUTURE PLAN**

**SET A  
NEW GOAL!**

As we close out this guidebook, we'll leave you with some final words of wisdom from our community partners throughout the state. Keep this advice in mind as you start to plan and implement improvements for your litter prevention and waste management program.

## TOP ADVICE FROM COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**Start plans early  
and seek the friendly  
advice or paid  
consulting services  
of those with  
LOCAL experience.**

**BRETT DAVIS**  
Grounds Krewe

Let's create a mindset shift  
when thinking about how to make  
events more sustainable.

**Ask first how we can  
reduce waste in the first  
place and THEN  
how we can recycle it.**

**FRANZISKA TRAUTMANN**  
Glass Half Full

**Defining your waste  
removal pathways is critical!**

Look at the footprint of your event  
and where you can bring your waste  
to be hauled away. What is the easiest  
route for your team to remove the waste,  
and where will it have the least impact  
on pedestrian traffic?

**MAURIANNA ROBICHAUX**  
Festival International de Louisiane

Event waste is an unavoidable outcome  
of every festival. Like any household or municipality,  
it results from life and the energy cycle.

**Keeping the end in mind when planning  
will determine the recovery potential and  
recyclability of the waste stream.**

**GREG GUIDROZ**  
Lafayette Consolidated Government

**Empowering your audience can  
change an entire community!**

While that might seem like a reach, educating your  
audience is a win-win. If you can create concise and  
actionable messaging, you can engage your fans in a  
way that lasts beyond your event.

**MORGAN VALERIE**  
French Quarter Festivals, Inc.



# SPECIAL THANKS



# QUESTIONS?



Contact Keep Louisiana Beautiful  
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[keeplouisianabeautiful.org](http://keeplouisianabeautiful.org)