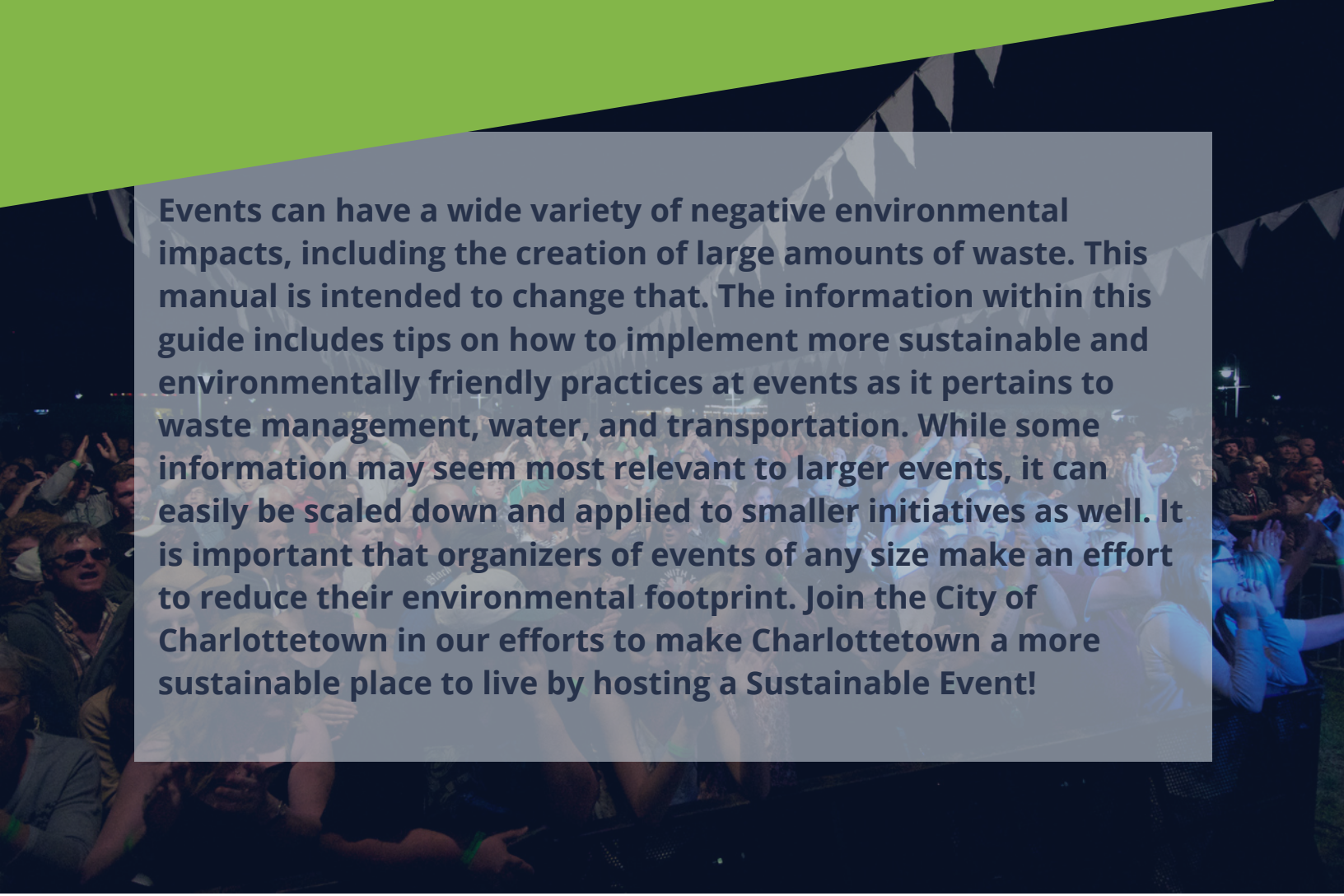




CHARLOTTETOWN

*Great things happen here.*

# Sustainable Events Manual



Events can have a wide variety of negative environmental impacts, including the creation of large amounts of waste. This manual is intended to change that. The information within this guide includes tips on how to implement more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices at events as it pertains to waste management, water, and transportation. While some information may seem most relevant to larger events, it can easily be scaled down and applied to smaller initiatives as well. It is important that organizers of events of any size make an effort to reduce their environmental footprint. Join the City of Charlottetown in our efforts to make Charlottetown a more sustainable place to live by hosting a Sustainable Event!

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# Before & During the Event

## 1. WASTE

Events, especially those with food vendors, can generate a lot of waste. It is important to reduce this as much as possible and to ensure that the waste being generated can be diverted from landfill through composting or recycling. It is the responsibility of event organizers to promote these practices and to implement an effective waste management plan.

### Engage with vendors

- To reduce waste, event vendors should:
  - Opt for reusable alternatives to disposable items whenever possible.
  - Ensure that any disposable materials are paper-based compostable or recyclable plastic. Please note that 'bioplastics' are **not** compostable on PEI and are considered waste.
  - Reduce any unnecessary packaging and single use items (e.g. straws and drink lids).
  - Eliminate the distribution of single-use or poor quality plastic promotional items such as balloons.
  - Comply with the City of Charlottetown's Street Vendor Bylaw's non-styrofoam food service ware requirement.
- Communicate this information to all event food vendors by providing them with the City of Charlottetown Food Vendor Guidelines



Incentivize sustainable practices - consider charging a lower registration fee for vendors using compostable or reusable packaging.

### Provide an effective waste sorting station

Improper sorting of waste commonly leads to recyclable and compostable materials ending up in landfill. One of the most important ways to ensure waste is properly sorted is to have an effective waste sorting station.

Each waste sorting station should have:

- At least one **clearly identified** (e.g. different colors, readable signage) bin for each waste stream: organics, recycling, and waste.
  - Please refer to [www.iwmc.pe.ca](http://www.iwmc.pe.ca) for a comprehensive sorting guide.
- Visible signage so that the station can be easily identified by event goers.
- At least one volunteer that is on site to guide attendees in sorting their waste; this has been shown to be the essential component in achieving properly sorted waste at events!

Communicate with whoever will be responsible for event waste disposal to ensure the system you are implementing is one with which they can comply, and the event's waste remains sorted all the way to the waste-depot drop off center.



**Note:** The City of Charlottetown has waste sorting stations & waste station signage available for use. Depending on a variety of factors, City Sustainability Outreach Volunteers may be available to accompany this rental to work as waste monitors at your event. For more information, contact [sustainability@charlottetown.ca](mailto:sustainability@charlottetown.ca)

# Before & During the Event

## Donate Food Waste

Plan to reduce your event's food waste by donating surplus food to a not-for-profit that can put it to use!

One way to do this is by joining the **PEI Food Recovery Network**. This project is facilitated by Second Harvest, Canada's largest food rescue charity, and aims to reduce the amount of unnecessary food waste from PEI businesses and events, providing quality food to not-for-profits to use in their programming. This initiative acts to distribute food to those in need as well as to eliminate the greenhouse gas emissions that result when food goes to waste.

Second Harvest works to ensure that businesses and events with extra food are connected with not-for-profits in order to facilitate efficient food donations. Second Harvest can assist this process in a number of ways:

1. The Second Harvest Food Rescue App - this app is a tool that streamlines the process of donating surplus food. It is free to join and allows businesses and events to post donations that non-profits can claim and pick up.
2. If using the app isn't for you, Second Harvest staff are ready to help! Contact them to set up a customized, offline donation.
3. Sometimes there is pre-planning required to ensure that the food practices at your event enable leftover food to be donated. A few simple changes can make all the difference! Second Harvest's staff are experts in this area and can help you learn how to ensure the food from your unique event is safe to donate.

If you have a pre-existing relationship with a food non-profit, another option is to donate the surplus food from your event directly to them, instead of working with Second Harvest and the PEI Food Recovery Network.



[Scan the QR code or click here to learn about the PEI Food Recovery Network or register with the Second Harvest Food Rescue App!](#)



## 2. WATER

Disposable plastic water bottles are a problematic and unnecessary source of waste especially when Charlottetown has some of the highest quality water in the world, fresh out of the tap! Having a 'water refill station' at your event and encouraging event goers to bring their own water bottles is a great way to avoid the generation of large quantities of single-use plastic waste.



At smaller events consider simply drawing attention to preexisting sources of drinking water or providing large jugs of tap water.

For events expecting 1,000 or more attendees, consider renting the City of Charlottetown's Water Bottle Refill Station. This is a great way to provide drinking water at events where other water sources are unavailable. Preference will be given to multi-day events where the days are consecutive. There are many site constraints for the use of the Water Buggy so please contact City staff well in advance of your event to determine whether it will be suitable for your location. For more information, contact: [sustainability@charlottetown.ca](mailto:sustainability@charlottetown.ca)



## 3. TRANSPORTATION

An effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as traffic and parking congestion associated with your event, is to promote the use of active and public transportation. Do this by informing the public of bus and bike routes they can take to get to your event venue.

Be prepared for event attendees who do travel by bicycle and ensure you have secure bicycle parking available at your event. Bicycle parking racks and signage can be rented from the City of Charlottetown. Please contact [sustainability@charlottetown.ca](mailto:sustainability@charlottetown.ca) for more information.



Promote cycling to your event by collaborating with vendors to give a small discount or free upgrade to event goers who show their bicycle helmet.



## 4. COMMUNICATION

### Attendees

In a recent survey conducted by the City of Charlottetown, 78% of citizens identified as being extremely concerned about the amount of plastic waste generated by Islanders. The public is more concerned than ever about the state of the environment and letting them know about your sustainability goals will both attract attendees and motivate them to participate in your initiatives. Make sure you:

- Promote your sustainability efforts on posters, websites, social media accounts, news releases, and announcements.
- Provide bike and public transit routes to get to your event.
- Let people know that you will have secure bicycle parking.
- Announce that water bottle refill station(s) will be available.
- Remind event goers to bring their reusable water bottles, travel mugs, cutlery or straws.
- Advertise any incentives you may be implementing to encourage sustainable behaviors.
- Highlight vendors using compostable packaging or implementing other sustainable practices such as the use of local foods.



Organize and advertise contests or prizes for event goers who participate in your green initiatives. For example, those that bring their own water bottle.

### Event Staff & Volunteers

It's important to make sure that everyone involved with putting on the event is on the same page. Hold an information session for staff and volunteers to educate them and get their input on the green initiatives you are implementing. This is especially important for volunteers in charge of waste sorting stations. A well informed team will be able to communicate most effectively with event goers and make sure they do their part to ensure the sustainability of the event.

### Sustainable Communications

Make sure your efforts to promote your sustainable event aren't in and of themselves unsustainable!

- Where possible, use virtual advertisements rather than printed materials.
- Ensure that all printed materials are recyclable.
- It's a great idea to have signage at the event promoting your green initiatives; opt for reusable signs that can be used each time the event is offered.

## EVALUATING & CELEBRATING YOUR SUCCESS

### 1. Evaluate

Take a look at how you did. If you had specific goals in mind, did you meet them? How well did your various initiatives work? Asking these questions will allow you to assess not only how successful you were but also how you might be able to improve in the future. Meet with stakeholders, including volunteers, vendors, and the venue to determine how you can improve moving forward. Consider assessing metrics such as the number of water bottles eliminated using the water bottle refill station, the usage of bicycle parking, and the amount of waste diverted from landfill. To determine your waste diversion rate, use the following formula:

$$\left[ \frac{\text{Total weight (or \# of bags)* of recycling and compost}}{\text{Total weight (or \# of bags)* of all waste (recycling, compost, \& garbage)}} \right] \times 100$$

\*Ensure you are consistent in your measurement of all types of waste

### 2. Celebrate!

Let event goers know how things went! People will be excited to hear about the impact they made by attending your sustainable event. Furthermore, by promoting your results, your event can serve as motivation for other events to make similar changes. Make sure you give a nod to those who won prizes for participating in your green initiatives!



# SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

## Before the Event

- Hold an information session for volunteers and event staff to communicate and get input on your sustainability goals and initiatives.
- Include sustainability messages in your marketing to communicate your plans to event goers and encourage their participation.
- Determine how you will set up your waste station to facilitate proper sorting of waste. Think about location within the event venue and how you will identify each waste stream. Consider renting the City of Charlottetown Waste Sorting Station.
- Communicate with your waste-pick up provider regarding your waste management plans to ensure it stays sorted all the way to the drop off depot.
- Recruit waste monitor volunteers to help event goers sort properly when using the waste station.
- Discuss your sustainability goals with all vendors to ensure their practices are in-line with your efforts.
- Distribute the City of Charlottetown Food Vendor Guidelines to inform food vendors how they can reduce their waste.
- Identify opportunities to provide attendees with access to tap water. Consider renting the City of Charlottetown's Water Bottle Refill Station for larger (1,000+ attendees) events.
- Determine and advertise bike and public transit routes that can be used to reach your event.
- Create a plan to reduce food waste at your event - consider joining the PEI Food Recovery Network and registering with the Second Harvest Food Rescue App!

- Ensure there is sufficient, secure bicycle parking available. Consider renting bike racks from the City of Charlottetown for your event.

## During the Event

- Set up waste sorting stations in busy areas, near vendors.
- Set up signage to indicate the location of waste, water, and bicycle parking stations.
- Ensure staff or volunteers are present to guide attendees using the waste station and that they're monitoring and changing bags as needed.
- Announce and remind event goers of green initiatives and encourage participation through contests and prizes.

## After the Event

- Ensure all waste is collected and disposed of properly.
- Evaluate the success of your sustainable initiatives.
- Determine your waste diversion rate.
- Engage with stakeholders regarding how sustainability can be improved at future events.
- Advertise and celebrate your success in holding a sustainable event!





For more information please contact the City of Charlottetown's  
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