

# UP YOUR GREEN GAME



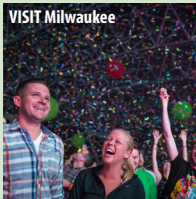
**Consider public transportation when selecting your event venue.** Is there a Bubl station near by? Access to The Hop streetcar? Can people carpool? Not only will you reduce your event's footprint, but your guests will thank you for easing the stress of parking.



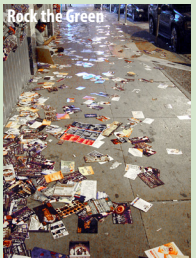
**Give greener swag.** Aim for sustainable, locally sourced giveaways that everyone can use again and again. Reusable cloth bags, metal water bottles or travel mugs, and even seed packets can commemorate your event and help participants reduce waste every day.



**Encourage your guests to bring reusable water bottles.** We all know how hot events can get in the summertime. Providing refillable water stations can save you money while encouraging your guests to stay healthy and hydrated.



**Say no to balloon launches.** What goes up must come down. Balloons are one of the most common plastics found during environmental cleanup efforts. Instead of balloons, try a fun eco-alternative like bubbles, flower petals, compostable confetti, or bird seed.



**Advertise smarter, not harder.** The rise of social media has made advertising for your event even easier, so why waste time covering the city with fliers? Instead of hundreds of small posters, try a few large ones in highly-trafficked areas. Ask your collaborators to share event information with their friends and family. Get creative.



**Think outside of the box!** The possibilities are endless to make an event green. Pair your event's goals with sustainability initiatives to create something truly unique. For example, Rock the Green's Sustainability Festival features a Pedal Powered Stage using energy from stationary bikes to run their microphones, speakers, and lights.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



The City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office develops practical and racially equitable solutions that improve people's lives and the economy while working to protect and restore the natural ecosystems that support our longterm prosperity. [milwaukee.gov/ECO](http://milwaukee.gov/ECO)



The Water Centric City Initiative showcases Milwaukee's global leadership in managing our natural water resources in sustainable and resilient ways. [milwaukee.gov/WCC](http://milwaukee.gov/WCC)



Milwaukee Recycles can help you learn more about how to recycle in the City of Milwaukee, and offers educational signs to post at your event. [milwaukee.gov/Recycles](http://milwaukee.gov/Recycles)



Compost Crusader will not only collect your compost, the organization can help you plan and implement a near-zero-waste event from start to finish. [CompostCrusader.com](http://CompostCrusader.com)



Plastic Free MKE offers resources to help you reduce your plastic use, as well as a list of Lake-Friendly certified restaurants and businesses you can recruit for your event. [PlasticFreeMKE.com](http://PlasticFreeMKE.com)



Rock the Green is an award-winning producer of green events that can coordinate your zero waste efforts and reduce your organization's eco-footprint. [RocktheGreen.com](http://RocktheGreen.com)



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# GREEN EVENTS GUIDE

FOR SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC EVENTS



Photo credit: VISIT Milwaukee





## HAVING FUN CAN BE LAKE FRIENDLY



### DID YOU KNOW?

**Every year, 22 million pounds of plastic enter the Great Lakes!**

Milwaukee is proud to be the **City of Festivals**, but we're also a **Water Centric City** that showcases global leadership in managing our water resources in a sustainable and resilient way.

Often times, public events leave our streets and waterways littered with plastic and debris, posing serious threats to the environment and our health. It's time we unite to **make our city more eco-friendly**.

This guide can help you take the first steps towards a conscious community event that protects the environment. Take a moment before you buy to **consider what your event actually needs to be successful**.

**Begin to ask yourself questions such as:** "Do your guests really need plastic bags, or handouts and giveaways that will never be used?" Or, "Do you really need balloons that will only be used for hours and then become waste, or worse, float away and end up in our rivers, streams, or lake?"

When making purchases, start at the top of this guide with the **"Best Choice"** and work your way down. Challenge yourself to shoot for the best choices you can.

On behalf of the City of Milwaukee, thank you for doing your part to make us a **World Class Eco-City on America's FreshCoast**.

BEST CHOICE

### REDUCE

The best way to keep waste out of our waterways and streets is to **buy less and use less**. This can be as easy as choosing bulk items like squeeze bottle condiments instead of individual packets, providing linen napkins instead of paper, or offering individual utensils instead of packets with a fork, knife, and spoon that won't all be used.

### REUSE

Switching to reusable containers, utensils, and service ware at your event is easier than ever. Wisconsin State Health Code allows drinkware to be refilled again and again as long as the cup doesn't touch the pour spout where beverages are served (just like using your own travel mug at your favorite coffee shop).

**Every item that gets reused is one less piece of trash.** Invest in reusable items. Purchasing utensils, forks, knives, spoons, plates, bowls, and cups are all ways to reduce waste. Use chafing dishes for food service instead of disposable aluminum pans.

### COMPOST

Employing a compost system at your event can significantly reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill, and can also give your food scraps a second life. Organizations like **Compost Crusader** and **Kompost Kids** can help facilitate the system and educate your guests.

### RECYCLE

Recycling is the law in the State of Wisconsin. The City of Milwaukee recycles paper, cardboard, metal cans, glass, and plastics #1, 2, & 5. Prevent confusion and contamination by avoiding items that can't be recycled. Recyclables are not accepted in plastic bags or liners, and they will most likely be landfilled if they are, so please collect recycling loose or in an open paper bag.

**Styrofoam (Plastic #6 or polystyrene), is not recyclable in Milwaukee** and never breaks down in the landfill. A styrofoam free event is an easy first sustainable step.

### LANDFILL

We know it's impossible to completely prevent sending waste to the landfill. Be sure to always have adequate trash receptacles to prevent contamination of recycling and compost bins, and to prevent litter from ending up on the ground or blowing away. Aim for the trifecta: compost, recycling, and landfill. Place each bin in a row and provide clear and consistent labeling to guide action.

WORSE CHOICE

### BONUS TIPS

**Ask folks to bring their own service ware with them.** Not everyone may be able to do this, but even if just a few do, that's waste avoided. Especially if you're going to be holding similar events over and over, it's worth investing in reusable items that can be washed and saved for the next event, rather than disposing of items and buying new ones each time.

**Be sure purchases are actually compostable.** Check with the Biodegradable Products Institute ([bpiworld.org](http://bpiworld.org)) or the U.S. Composting Council ([compostingcouncil.org](http://compostingcouncil.org)).



Learn more about composting in Milwaukee at [milwaukee.gov/compost](http://milwaukee.gov/compost).



**Don't want to take all the recyclables from your event home?** Recyclables normally accepted at the curbside can be brought to one of the City's two [Drop-Off Centers](#) for no charge.

**Need recycling containers for your event to help reduce landfill waste?** Contact Milwaukee Recycles to learn [what's acceptable in the recycling](#) or for more details on drop-off sites. Reach out at [milwaukee.gov/recycles](http://milwaukee.gov/recycles).

