

Volunteer Guidelines

Zero Waste Events



What is a Zero Waste event? The goal at a Zero Waste Event is to plan ahead so that only materials that are locally recyclable or compostable are distributed (minimal/no materials that have to be landfilled). At the event itself, we will provide recycling and composting bins, along with a small trash can.

Some Zero Waste Successes: In both 2016 and 2017, the Food Gatherer's Grillin' event diverted 92% of all waste from landfill, and the 2017 Local Food Summit diverted 99.4%!

Your Role as a Zero Waste Volunteer:

- **Public Outreach/Education** – We ask that you stand next to the stations and make a concerted effort to connect with event guests that approaches you to make a waste choice. Zero Waste is a new concept to many folks, and with each interaction you make a great difference in educating the community about zero waste. You may end up repeating yourself a lot!
- **Prevent contamination** – Please show people **how** to sort materials before doing it for them. People learn most effectively about zero waste to landfill when they physically sort their own discards.
- **Maintaining your station** – If your collection bins fill up during the event, please communicate that you need replacements with Zero Waste Washtenaw staff patrolling the area.
- **Have fun!** Meet people! Learn and enjoy the day! ☺

What materials are accepted in which bin?

Look to the descriptions listed on each sign. If you have questions about specific materials, please ask Zero Waste Washtenaw staff! Generally:

- **Recycling** bin includes paper and cardboard; aluminum cans and foil; steel food/beverage cans; plastic cups, bottles with lids, clean and dry containers and deli-trays; bottles and jars; clean and dry milk cartons and drink boxes
- **Compost** bin includes ALL FOOD SCRAPS (meat, dairy, bones, etc.); paper products (soiled or clean plates, napkins, paper towels); waxed papers; compostable cutlery, plates and cups; wooden stir-sticks, chopsticks toothpicks and skewers
- **Landfill/Trash:** Plastic-lined paper (such as “to-go” coffee or soda cups), straws, Styrofoam, plastic bags or plastic film packaging, soiled or dirty plastic plates or cups, plastic cutlery

Composting at this Zero Waste Event vs. Home Composting: During the event we will be accepting more materials for composting than are usually able to be composted at home.

Why can't I compost all these materials (meats & compostable foodservice ware) in my backyard compost bin?

The materials from this event will be composted at an industrial-scale facility. While the process is the same as home composting, the piles in an industrial setting are much larger and therefore get much hotter. This allows the compostable cutlery, plates and cups, plus broader food waste to break down safely and quickly, which does not happen in a smaller, at-home compost pile.

Festival Patron says, “I know of an event in Washtenaw County that should be Zero Waste!”

We are looking to partner with events planners throughout Washtenaw County. Please tell them/their organization to contact Noelle Bowman at 734.222.6821 or to flag us down the day of event!

Visit www.ZeroWasteWashtenaw.com for complete list of event partners and more info!