

# Green Events Guide

Make your next event sustainable!



## Why host a Green Event?

---

Hundreds of events are hosted at Indiana University every year. Though seemingly innocuous, events tend to be resource-intensive and to generate large amounts of waste. There are simple steps event planners can take to reduce waste and energy-use during the planning, execution, and cleanup of events. In partnership with SustainIU, hosts can help reduce the carbon footprint and improve the environmental sustainability of their events.



The Green Events Guide explains the ways in which events can be more sustainably executed and provides resources to aid in the process of attaining Green Event Certification. Any requests or questions about greening events can be directed to: [sustain@indiana.edu](mailto:sustain@indiana.edu)



**SUSTAIN IU**

# Event Advertising and Stationery

## Paperless Flyers and Digital Signs

For event advertising, minimize paper waste by distributing flyers and information through social media, email, and digital signage. You can advertise your event on the permanent screens in RPS buildings, Wells Library, and the Indiana Memorial Union, which each require specific applications that can be found through the links below:

RPS: <http://test.rps.indiana.edu/rps/advertising.cfm>

Wells: <https://libraries.indiana.edu/digital-ad-guidelines>

IMU: <https://imu.indiana.edu/about/advertise.html>

### One ton of recycled office paper saves:

- 4,100 Kwh of energy
- 9 barrels of oil
- 54 million Btu's of energy
- 60 pounds of air pollutants from being released
- 7,000 gallons of water
- 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space

---

## Newsletters and Email Lists

In preparation for your event, sharing advertising and information using email lists and campus and community newsletters is an easy and effective way to reduce paper waste.

Other event materials such as registration documents, agendas, and presentations should be shared via e-mail. Additionally, offer attendees an opportunity to distribute resources and communications electronically before, during, and after the event to minimize waste throughout all stages.

---

## Stationery

In place of paper notepads, utilize projectors, dry-erase boards, and chalkboards to record notes and deliver presentations. Reserving a room with the appropriate technological resources e.g., multiple retractable projector screens, will aid the effort to reduce paper waste.

Encourage attendees to bring their own reusable materials instead of providing complementary stationery and writing implements.

**\*For all unavoidable print materials, use 100% post-consumer recycled or scrap paper and print double-sided to reduce waste.**

# Food, Catering, and Waste

## Catering

If you plan on providing food during your event, offering vegetarian and vegan options is a great way to help reduce the environmental impacts of food production. In particular, meats—especially beef, which produces 22 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent GHG emissions per kilogram and uses approximately 1,800 gallons of water to produce per pound—have a much larger carbon footprint than plant-based foods.

Ordering locally-sourced, seasonal, and organic foods also helps to reduce the environmental impacts associated with food production.

Catering with Locally-sourced, Vegetarian, and Vegan Options: [Traditions Catering](#)

Use reusable cutlery, napkins, and table linens to prevent unnecessary waste. If using IMU catering, these items are available upon request free of charge.

---

## Food Waste and Composting

An estimated 30-40% (up to 70 million pounds) of America's food supply is thrown away. Food that goes uneaten enters landfills and contributes to green house gas emissions; composting leftover food from events reduces the associated environmental impacts of food waste. If unfamiliar with composting, the [EPA guide](#) is a useful resource.



For composting, you can request five gallon buckets from the [Hilltop Garden and Nature Center](#) to collect compostable materials at catered events. Compost can be donated to the Center, which is located at 2367 E. 10th St. Bloomington, IN. To request buckets or donate compost, e-mail the Garden Center at: [hilltop@indiana.edu](mailto:hilltop@indiana.edu).

---

## Food Donations

Despite high rates of food waste, many Americans are food insecure; in 2015, approximately 42 million people lived in food insecure households. If there is leftover food from your event that is unopened, consider donating it to one of several organizations fighting hunger in the Bloomington area:



[Mother Hubbard's Cupboard](#)  
Monday–Friday from 11 am–6 pm



COMMUNITY KITCHEN  
OF MONROE COUNTY

[Community Kitchen of Monroe County](#)  
Monday–Friday from 7am–6pm,  
Saturday from 11am–6pm



[Hoosier Hills Food Bank](#)  
Monday–Friday from 9am–5pm

# Recycling and Minimizing Waste



In 2013, Americans generated approximately 254 million tons of trash. Although there is a significant amount of waste generated on our campus daily, a large proportion of this trash can be prevented and reduced. The EPA estimates that 75% of the American waste stream is recyclable, but only 30% is actually recycled.

Reduce your event's waste by offering recycling receptacles, which are available in all IUB buildings. Campus recycling is single-stream, meaning that you do not have to separate recyclable materials. Bring attention to recycling by announcing the location of recycling bins at your event, reminding your attendees of the importance of waste reduction, and posting by the bins.

**Buying in Bulk:** Avoid excess waste from packaging by purchasing in bulk.

**Buying Recyclable Materials:** When purchasing materials for your event, make sure that all unavoidable packaging is recyclable.

## What can be recycled?

- Plastics 1-7
- Cardboard
- Paper and Paperboard
- Mail
- Aluminum, Steel and Tin
- Glass
- Magazines, Books, and Catalogs

## Beverages

Plastic bottles and single-use containers for beverages produce tons of waste every year. Providing reusable containers and encouraging event attendees to bring their own bottles are easy ways to reduce waste.

**Water:** Not only is tap water just as safe as bottled water, it is also significantly cheaper and better for the environment. In America, producing bottled water requires more than 17 million barrels of oil annually, which would be enough to fuel 1.3 million cars for a year.

At your event, provide pitchers of water and reusable glasses to reduce carbon emissions and plastic waste.

**Coffee:** If providing coffee at your event, order fair-trade, organic, and/or shade-grown coffee. IMU catering offers fair-trade coffee upon request.

Additionally, provide reusable mugs and stirrers and avoid offering individually packaged creamers and sweeteners to reduce waste that is typically generated when serving coffee.



# Transportation

## Alternative Transportation Options

Encourage attendees to walk or use alternative transportation to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution. For all unavoidable vehicular travel, encourage car-pooling.

**Biking:** Bloomington is a Gold Level bike-friendly community according

to the standards set by the League of American Bicyclists. Encourage attendees to take advantage of the exceptional biking infrastructure offered by our city and share tips for safe biking.



### Digital Conferences and Webinars

If possible, avoid requiring your attendees to travel to participate in your event. There are many rooms equipped for videoconferencing and multiple platforms for online collaboration:

- Google + Hangouts
- Adobe Connect
- Jabber Video (Movi)
- Microsoft Lync

Contact [Collaboration Technologies](#) for more information.

**Public Transportation:** Provide bus schedules for the [IU Campus Bus](#) and [Bloomington Transit](#). For guests that are staying off-campus, provide city [bus tickets](#), which can be purchased in sheets of 10.

If attendees will be coming from IUPUI, accommodate for the [Campus Commute](#) schedule.

# Event Venue, Decor, and Giveaways

## Event Venue

To reduce energy costs, choose a venue and meeting time that can utilize daylight. When booking a venue, consider reserving an event space in a LEED Certified building, which are buildings that conserve resources, reduce operating costs and pollution, help address global warming, protect occupant health, and improve occupant productivity.



## Decor

You can reduce unnecessary waste by abstaining from decorating or using exclusively reusable decorations.

**Flowers:** If planning on ordering flowers for your event, find a supplier that is committed to sustainability. Consider requesting fresh-cut or dried bouquets from Hilltop Garden and Nature Center. E-mail [hilltop@indiana.edu](mailto:hilltop@indiana.edu) for more information.

## Giveaways

Avoid distributing prizes or giveaways to prevent waste. If providing gifts or prizes, make sure all giveaways are useful and sustainable e.g., reusable water bottles or mugs.