



Hosting a Zero Waste Event

Are you hosting an event and would like to get involved in the zero waste initiative? Here are some action steps you can take to make your event a success!

Request Additional Bins

If your event requires formal setup, please make a request for additional bins through conferencing (confer@aquinas.edu). Please include the exact number of composting and recycling bins as well as any additional signage you would like for the bins. Please make the formal request to have all composting and recycling bins accompanied by a trash can and NO stray trash cans at the events.

Reduce Paper Use

Will your event require invitations? This is a great place to start reducing your paper use. You can send invitations via email to attendees, or use social media tools such as Facebook. If email is not an option, please consider sending invitations only to a targeted mailing list. Avoid printing agendas/programs by providing a QR code and mobile app with a schedule or agenda. You can also email the agenda before the event to advertise that it is a zero waste event and inform attendees that hard copies of the agendas will not be provided. They would have to print the schedule themselves if they would like a hard copy. E-mail as many documents as possible to guests prior to the event, rather than having printed version for every guest. Also consider making the agenda availability on a large foam core or projecting it using a PowerPoint.

Food and Beverage Considerations

Seek

- China
- Reusable flatware
- Bio-based plastics (PLA)
- Paper products

Avoid- Trash Namely:

- Styrofoam
- Plastic/cling wrap
- Non-recyclable plastic
- Individual Drink containers (Water bottles/pop cans)*
- Individual condiment packets (Ketchup)**

** Instead: Provide drink stations with compostable paper cups, or ask your attendees to bring their own reusable cup.*

*** Bulk condiment options with small paper cups is a great solution. Buying items in bulk in place of individually packages can eliminate unnecessary packaging waste (which is generally not compostable or recyclable).*

Note: Any disposable product that will be contaminated by food must be compostable.

Acceptable Items

Compostable Waste

1. Paper products (i.e. paper plates and paper napkins) are compostable and acceptable.

2. Special plastic products (i.e. compostable plastics) are also acceptable, but the product must be ASTM 6400 certified. See below information about purchasing these items.

We repeat: All paper waste, bio-based plastic, and food waste can be composted at Aquinas. Compostable plastics have to meet the ASTM 6400 standard. If any product is expected to be contaminated by food, please consider compostable option.

Common Compostable Items:

- Paper plates
- Paper napkins
- Paper towels
- Paper cups- If they have a thin wax coating on the inside, it is still compostable!
- Pizza boxes
- Food-soiled cardboard/paperboard (i.e. paper boats)
- Bio-Based Plastic Utensils
- Wax Paper (i.e. basket liners, McDonald's wrapper)
- Bio-Based Plastic Cups
- Bio-Based Plastic Straws
- Wooden stir sticks
- Paper packets of sugar
- Paper bags
- Tissue paper
- Wax-lined cardboard containers (i.e. the paper milk carton we got in grade school)

Specific Product Examples:

- Greenware cups- <http://www.fabri-kal.com/product/greenware-cold-drink-cups/>
- Bio-Based Plastic Utensils: <http://worldcentric.org/biocompostables/utensils>
- Bare Compostable Paper Cups: http://www.officemax.com/office-supplies/breakroom-cleaning/cups-and-lids/cups/product-prod4220412?cm_mmc=Googlepla_-_Office%20Supplies_-_Breakroom%20and%20Cleaning_-_Cups%20and%20Lids&ci_src=17588969&ci_sku=22470229
- Standard paper plates- http://www.webstaurantstore.com/9-white-economy-paper-plate-1000-cs/4339BULK.html?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=4339BULK&utm_campaign=PLA&gclid=CJXdnJKRgbcFetDMgodgGcAnA

Recyclable Waste

Like residential recycling in Kent County, all recyclable waste generated at Aquinas is sent to the Kent County Materials Recovery Facility. Therefore, please use the Access Kent guidelines to determine if an item is recyclable at Aquinas. <http://www.recyclekent.org/Recycling/recyclable.htm>

Of course, the most important note with recycling is that the waste must be clean and food free. From events, common recyclable waste includes plastics (#1 - #7) and (food-free) paper and magazines/newspaper.

Ex...If you choose to serve a hamburger on a #5 plastic plate, the grease will have to be cleaned off before the plate is recycled. For that reason, we discourage using recyclable items if there is a chance of food contamination. Instead, consider compostable products like paper plates.

Common Recyclable Items:

- Milk jugs
- Red solo cup (must be almost completely clean. A little drink residue is okay, but please don't use for greasy/sticky food items)
- Office paper (i.e. brochures, magazines, agendas)
- Water bottles
- Cardboard
- All clear and colored glass containers***
- Plastic grocery bags (#2 and #4 only)
- Aluminum Foil***
- Plastic Ketchup bottles***
- Pop cans
- Tin Cans***

****must be food-free*

Unacceptable Items- Items that are commonly “trash” and we ask that you avoid:

- Bun/bread bags (unless it is stamped with a number 2 or 4)
- Trash bags
- Ziploc bags
- Candy wrappers*
- Styrofoam**
- Plastic/cling wrap
- Most thin-film plastic packaging
- Chip bags*

** Almost every building contains a “special collection” area for Terracycle (chip bags, candy wrappers, snack bags, etc..). If you bring a Terracycle-able item on campus, please locate the area for disposal.*

*** Almost every building contains a “special collection” area for Styrofoam. If you bring Styrofoam on campus, please locate the area for disposal.*

Advertise Zero Waste

Make sure event attendees know about our zero waste to landfill goal. If you would like additional signage or information available to your guests about the initiative, please contact a Zero Waste Team Member. If you would like volunteers to help educate your guests on proper composting and recycling at waste stations, please contact a zero waste member. These volunteers will help give your attendees instant feedback on their recycling/composting habits.