

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR EVENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

WHY?

- ✓ If everyone on the planet **consumed at the level of the average American**, at least **four additional planets** worth of resources would be needed to support the planet's **six billion people**.
- ✓ The average North American consumes **10 times** as much as the average person in **China** and **30 times** as much as the average person in **India**.
- ✓ A can thrown away will be there for 500 years. A can recycled will be back on the shelf in 6 weeks.

Invitations

- Save money and reduce paper waste by using Paperless Post, Evite, Sendomatic, or a similar online invitation service.
- If you do print posters or invitations, use paper with recycled-content.
- Give a phone number for RSVPs instead of reply cards.
- Create a webpage with all your event info and refer to it in any printed material.

Transportation

- Encourage guests to carpool or take public transportation to the event.
- During the non-winter season (mid April – mid December) buses serve the Truckee-Tahoe Airport, Pioneer Commerce Center, Downtown, Gateway Shopping Center, Donner State Park and the west end of Donner Lake on a fixed hourly schedule from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, every day except Sunday.
- Truckee Dial-A-Ride 530-587-7451, <http://www.townoftruckee.com/index.aspx?page=53>
- North Lake Tahoe transport also connects with Truckee locations. More information is here: <http://www.laketahoetransit.com/home>

Food & Drinks

- If your menu includes only finger food, you can eliminate the need for any utensils. Examples of items that don't need silverware are: sandwiches, wraps, hamburgers, hot dogs, chips.
- Serve cupcakes instead of one big birthday cake.
- Serve food buffet style rather than in "box lunch" form. People will only take what they like.
- Serve beverages and condiments in bulk-packaging (2-Liter, Kegs, squeeze bottles) rather than individual serving packets.
- Serve local and organic food when possible, and offer a vegetarian option.
- For drinks, instead of having a huge variety, create one special signature drink.
- Avoid plastics and non-recyclables: Skip individual plastic water bottles and juice boxes (not recyclable). Drinks in aluminum, glass or plastic containers are recyclable.
- Bring a large reusable water dispenser for water or to mix frozen juices.
- To avoid waste, be careful not to overbuy. Here are some food and drink estimators:
 - <http://entertaining.about.com/cs/recipesandmenus/a/foodquantity.htm>
 - <http://www.delish.com/food/recalls-reviews/food-estimates-for-memorial-day-parties>
 - <http://www.greatpartyrecipes.com/partyfoodplanning.html>
 - <http://www.evite.com/pages/party/drink-calculator.jsp>
 - <http://www.alloccasionrentals.net/resources/checklist-tools-guides.php>
- Arrange with a local food bank to pick up leftovers at the end of the event. Or, bring extra containers to send extra food home with the guests.

Party Setups & Decorations

- Instead of buying disposable plates, utensils and cups, consider using washable items instead. Your event will be a little nicer and for smaller events, just 1 load in the dishwasher will take care of most of the cleanup.
- If you don't already have all the equipment you need, try to borrow or rent the rest instead of buying something you might use just 1 or 2 times a year.
- Provide incentives for attendees to bring reusable items (e.g. mugs, utensils) rather than expecting you to provide disposables.
- In Truckee, Eventmasters (www.eventmastersusa.com) or A Party House (www.apartyhouse.com) can rent just about any type of party equipment needed. Rental plates start at \$.35 each, and glasses are \$.45.
- Avoid plastic tablecloths – use paper or cloth. A twin flat sheet also makes a great table cloth.
- Consider natural decorations (interesting succulents, flowering plants, colorful fruits, stones, bare branches decorated with ornaments or ribbon, etc.) that are biodegradable or reusable.
- Party favors can be eco-friendly and reusable: A t-shirt, a stainless steel water bottle, potted herbs, and fair trade chocolates. Or give no-waste gifts like movie, concert or sporting event tickets.

Recycling

- Make recycling easy. Set out bins that clearly labeled recycling bins for bottles and cans.
- Bring extra blue bags for collecting paper waste.
- Place recycle bins right next to the trash containers.