

How to keep your event out of the landfill



The Town of Charlotte has a new policy aimed at reducing and sorting waste: our town “is dedicated to making all events in public spaces as waste free as possible by collecting in three streams: recycling, compost and trash.” (see [Waste Management at Town Facilities](#) April 2014)

We like to think that Vermont is “green”, but Chittenden County residents still send materials to the landfill that can be recycled, composted or reclaimed for better reuse. An estimated 34% of landfill “waste” is recyclable and 26% is compostable. This means that 60 % of materials we’ve sent to the landfill don’t belong there!

A little planning goes a long way.

Not only can we improve our “sorting” to keep reusable resources out of the landfill, but we can also get better at REDUCING our single use habits. We live in a convenience driven “take out” society, but there are more sustainable options. Here are some ideas to reduce landfill “waste” from events held in Charlotte:

1. Plan ahead; communicate your **landfill-free** goals to everybody involved in the event, including vendors and attendees. Help them understand what items to use (and avoid) at the event, to reach this goal.
2. Choose reusable plates, utensils, cups and packaging whenever possible. If not possible, choose compostable or recyclable containers or minimally packaged goods instead. Compostable food ware is preferable to using recyclable plastic, because the remaining food stuck on plastic contaminates the recycling stream.
3. Confirm what can and cannot be composted. It’s easy! Here’s all the information you need: <http://www.greenmountaincompost.com/all-about-compost/what-is-compostable/compostable-products/>
4. Confirm what can and cannot be recycled. <http://cswd.net/content-blocks/chittenden-county-mandatory-recyclables/>
5. **Avoid single use and non-recyclable items bound for landfill:** plastic coated paper cups and plates, plastic bags and utensils, Styrofoam, small single-serve packaging (wrappers, condiments, etc.).
6. Create one or more “sorting stations” with one recycling bin, one compost container and one trash can RIGHT NEXT to each other. Hot tip: tape samples of items right on the bins they go in. It’s the clearest way to help EVERYONE sort their materials properly. Please enlist waste sorting station monitors to make this successful.
7. Please print and use these signs at the sorting stations: available at <http://cswd.net/event-waste-reduction/>



8. Plan to take compost to a CSWD drop-off center, or contact afoulk@gmavt.net about alternatives.

Great! You’ve done it. Thank you for showing how much you care for our community by making it a habit to keep your events out of the landfill!