

## Maryland Special Event Recycling Law

*A Fact Sheet for Event Organizers*



*In 2015, the State of Maryland enacted legislation that mandates recycling at certain special events held in public spaces.*

*A special event may be a street fair, concert, picnic, sports event or other activities.*

*When conducting such events, there are many opportunities to reduce waste and recycle materials.*

*There are many items that can be recycled, reused, composted or donated. This guide and helpful checklist are designed to help as you plan to minimize waste at your event.*

**The key to success is including your recycling efforts in the earliest stages of event planning.**



### **What are My Responsibilities Under the State's Special Events Recycling Program (SERP)?**

Under Maryland Law, special event organizers are responsible for providing recycling at special events that meet the following criteria:

- Includes temporary or periodic use of a public street, publicly owned site or facility, or public park;
- Serves food or drink; and
- Is expected to have 200 or more persons in attendance.

Event organizers are responsible for providing and placing recycling receptacles adjacent to each trash receptacle at the event. Recycling receptacles must be clearly distinguished from trash receptacles by color or signage. You must ensure that the recyclables collected are delivered for recycling. Finally, you are responsible for all costs and labor to carry out the recycling program at your event.

### **Which Materials Must be Recycled?**

You must provide for recycling of at least plastic, metal and glass containers, and paper. (Paper plates and napkins are NOT recyclable.) If serving food at the event, you must assess the availability of recycling service for food waste and if available, provide it. Food waste must be sent to a facility that is permitted or approved by the appropriate regulatory agency.

### **What Steps Should I Take Before the Event?**

The other side of this page offers a checklist of steps for planning event recycling and waste reduction. One of the first steps is to decide how recycling will be processed after the event; event organizers can:

- Transport recyclable materials to the Frederick County transfer station and pay the prevailing tipping fee for commercial recycling.
- Contract a recycling hauler to collect materials and deliver them for recycling.
- Receive prior agreement from the site owner to use the site's existing recycling system.

### **Where Can I Find More Information?**

For more information, please contact the Frederick County Department of Solid Waste Management by calling 301-600-7406 or by sending email to:

[recycle@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:recycle@FrederickCountyMD.gov).



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## Checklist for Special Event Recycling

- Review the law** - Determine if the law applies to your event and understand any responsibilities required.
- Designate a leader** - Who will be responsible for oversight of recycling and/or garbage collection? Make sure their contact information is available to staff, vendors and volunteers.
- Identify partners** - Consider organizing a recycling committee that includes stakeholders and creates partnerships. Identify all parties that would be affected by the inclusion of recycling at the event. Stakeholders may include event organizers, promoters, facility managers, facility users, vendors and garbage and recycling collectors and processors.
- Identify your collection system** - What size and type of containers will you use? Where will they be obtained from? Make sure recycle bins are available for both vendors and event attendees to utilize. Ideally, a recycle bin should be adjacent to each trash can. Large blue bins can be purchased from <https://www.uline.com/Product/AdvSearchResult?KeywordTyped=Recycling%20Containers&keywords=R%20recycling%20Containers>, and cardboard bins can be purchased from <http://www.webstaurantstore.com/images/products/main/25075/440028/large-cardboard-recyclable-trash-can-10-case.jpg>.
- Identify your processing methods** - Who will empty bins as they become full? Where will materials be stored? Determine how recyclable materials will be collected and transported off site and who is responsible. May be self-hauled, taken by a contracted hauler or possibly processed using the site's existing recycling plan. Determine when hauling will occur - during or after the event?
- Funding your recycling activity** - Planning should allow you to understand any costs associated with the recycling effort. Captured savings from reduced waste disposal costs may help fund recycling efforts.
- Educating and Training** - Promote recycling and educate employees, volunteers and attendees. Utilize an effective, illustrative educational program that will be understood by all participants.
- Reduce the amount of contaminants in the recyclables** - Teaching visitors and staff to recycle properly is essential. Use containers that are large enough and clearly marked for the successful capture of recyclables. Make sure they are adequately placed in areas that are convenient to the recycler. Also, make sure that there are adequate and strategically placed garbage containers. Recycling posters and container label templates are available for no charge at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/EventRecycling](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/EventRecycling).
- Site Monitoring** - Look at trash cans and recycle bins during the event to assess if materials are being properly placed. Ensure that labels and posters remain visible and legible. Make adjustments to the system as necessary.
- Measure and evaluate your recycling efforts** - After your event, record lessons learned. Ask for feedback, share your results and thank your partners and participants.

### **What happens to the event's recyclables?**

After collection at your event, recyclables are usually sent to a processing facility where they are sorted and packaged for sale to new markets to be remade into useable products. For example, recycled plastic water bottles can be sorted, baled and sold to be made into fleece or other polyester clothing, automobile parts and new plastic bottles among many other uses. If not recycled, these bottles would be disposed and have no further use. Thank you for helping Frederick County residents "Recycle More. Waste Less."

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**For more information on the Maryland State Special Event Recycling Law, please visit:**

[Mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmag/frmMain.aspx?pid=billpage&stab=o1&id=sbo781&tab=subject3&ys=2014RS](http://Mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmag/frmMain.aspx?pid=billpage&stab=o1&id=sbo781&tab=subject3&ys=2014RS)