

BYE BYE PLASTIC HELLO BYO™



PLASTIC FREE EVENTS GUIDE

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A guide to help reduce single use plastic at your events.

Purpose of this Guide

The Plastic Free Event Guide has been produced as a resource to support any local business, community group or individual running Plastic Free Events from meetings, conferences, markets and festivals.

It has drawn on valuable information with permission from the Boomerang Alliance Plastic Free Council & Community Event Guidelines and www.plasticfreeplaces.org.

With global, national and community attention now focused on single-use plastics and their impacts, this guide assists organisations and individuals take a leadership role and respond to community expectations by providing some practical solutions to removing single-use plastics at events.



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What is the problem with Single-Use Plastic?



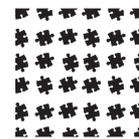
Used once, lasts forever. Every year we use over 300 million tonnes of new plastic. Half of this is used just once.



Australians use 2.7 billion single use plastic straws every year. Used on average for 20 minutes, they can take more than 45+ years to break down.



In Australia, 150 million plastic bags end up as litter, only 3% of them are currently being recycled and 200,000 bags are dumped in landfill every hour.



Plastic breaks up, not down...fragmenting into even smaller pieces, micro-plastics are turning our ocean into plastic soup and end up in the food chain, and in us!



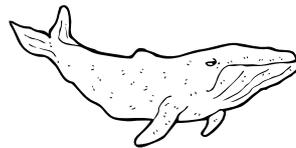
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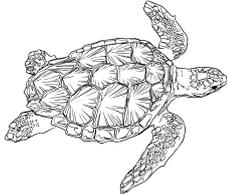
Reducing plastic is good for our oceans...



8 million tonnes of plastic waste leaks into the world's oceans every year.



Plastic pollution adversely impacts over 700 species.



Half of all marine turtles have eaten plastic. Taronga's Wildlife Hospital has seen over 350 marine turtles brought in since 1984, many with plastic related illness.



Over 90% of seabirds worldwide have plastic in their stomach.

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And good for your business...



Reducing disposable products reduces waste and associated costs (repeat purchasing and removal)



Research indicates that 8 out of 10 shoppers support a plastic bag ban.



Many shoppers look for the 'green' credentials of a business to decide between competitors.



Business decisions can influence producer responsibility more greatly than consumer decisions alone, having a greater environmental impact.



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What is the problem with Single-Use Plastic at EVENTS?



Plastic Pollution generated from public events can be a major cause of environmental degradation, species decline and potential health impacts.



Single-use disposable plastics are used once for a matter of minutes and then thrown away. This is a waste of a non-renewable resource and does not align with the values of a sustainable event



Plastic litter is an eye-sore and contaminates our open and public places, negating the positive experience of these events..



Plastic remains in landfill and never completely breaks down, just into smaller micro-plastics. This poses a severe problem for the health of marine life and the entire food chain.

Event organisers have a responsibility to reduce the amount of waste generated and ensure the event space is left in the same condition as it was found.



PLASTIC FREE PRINCIPLES

INFORM & EDUCATE

Commitment to inform and educate stakeholders and the public about your plastic-free event. Identify clear expectations of all stakeholders (from suppliers, staff, volunteer attendees) to avoid the use of single-use plastic at your events.

IDENTIFY

Clearly identify single-use plastic items that should be avoided or replaced and outline recommended alternative products. These should either be reusable or 100% compostable (compliant with the Australian composting standards). For more information on suppliers and certifications, check out our Sustainable Supplier Guide at https://byebyeplastic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/BBP-Sustainable-Supplier-Guide_Final.pdf

WASTE DISPOSAL OPTIONS

Manage the collection of discarded materials through a three-bin system (recycle, organics, waste). Where these services do not exist, use a two-bin system (recycle and waste). Container refund schemes (if available) provide an incentive for a separate drink container collection.

LITTER FREE

Enhance the reputation of the event by ensuring the site is free from litter, leaving the venue in the same condition it was found



PLASTIC FREE PRINCIPLES

CLEAR SIGNAGE & SUPPORT

Minimise contamination and reduce waste collection costs by keeping disposal options together and providing clear signage that addresses and advises on avoiding items being put in the wrong bin. Where possible, arrange volunteers to monitor bins and provide assistance and guidance to event patrons.

ADEQUATE RESOURCING

Ensure all waste streams are planned and serviced appropriately. Investigate a range of options suitable to your event, location, venue etc. This could include commercial composting, container refund collection and reusable services. For more information on sustainable suppliers have a look on our Sustainable Supplier Directory at <https://byebyeplastic.org.au/toolkits-resources/suppliers-resources/>

DATA COLLECTION & EVALUATION

Monitor and evaluate the impact of plastic-free events through efficient data collection to measure performance and practices at events.

PROMOTE

Promote your Plastic Free Event Policy to other events and organisations, demonstrating the key benefits and encourage their adoption of a similar policy where relevant.



GUIDELINES IN PRACTICE

ELIMINATE COMMON PROBLEM ITEMS FIRST

As a first step, focus on eliminating the six single-use plastic items that are most often littered and found in the waste stream. These include items like water bottles, coffee cups and lids, straws, foodware (cups, plates, cutlery etc), takeaway containers and plastic bags.

SUSTAINABLE DECORATIONS

Whilst very popular and visually appealing balloons wreak havoc on the environment, particularly for the waterways and marine life.

A practical way to avoid them would be to prohibit their use and release and recommend alternative decorative items.

VENDOR POLICIES

All food and drink vendors should be required to provide reusable or 100% compostable foodware. This can be difficult for some vendors to achieve immediately and we recommend supporting them with this transition. You can point them to our Supplier Resources.

Include specific requirements in vendor contracts and ensure they are appropriately informed of the policies and why they have been adopted, with sufficient lead times and support to transition.

Ensure you consider all vendor related items, such as promotional materials used by event organisers, vendors, performers. They should also be reusable, recyclable or compostable for consistency.



GUIDELINES IN PRACTICE

USE WHAT'S THERE

Consider your location and what facilities are available eg water bubbler, access to kitchen, portable water stations. Ensure adequate signage and communication before and during the event to encourage positive behaviour such as bringing along reusables, refilling water bottles. Ensure that you consider accessibility by children and those with mobility aids.

CONSIDER REUSABLES

There are many reusable options, items and systems to make it easier for you to run a plastic free event. Whilst these are not always feasible for every event consider how reusables might assist. Consider stocking or hiring refillable drinkware where possible. For larger events this might involve the public purchasing (or providing a deposit) and keeping a cup for the event. No drinks would be served without a refillable cup. These items can also be branded and used repeatedly, where desired.

SUSTAINABLE SINGLE-USE

Where refillables are not provided, events should provide drinks in more sustainable materials. Depending on the items and the event requirements this might include aluminium cans, glass bottles, boxed water or certified compostable containers (subject to local regulations for container use at events).



GUIDELINES IN PRACTICE

PROMOTE & EDUCATE

Preparation and communication is key to assist all stakeholders in supporting a plastic free event. Change takes time and consistent communication and support is critical to a successful transition. A crawl, walk, run approach is an effective way to bring everyone along with you.

Promote the event as plastic free. Educate all stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, vendors and suppliers. Ensure you have resources and time to communicate your plastic free event approach, why it's important and what success looks like. The level of success you have will largely be down to how engaged and supportive your entire event team is of the policy.

COLLECTION SERVICE

An appropriate collection service should be considered and in place for all identified waste streams. A collection service for beverage containers should be provided if a container refund scheme is available. We suggest you arrange for a local not-for-profit group to receive the refund.

If there is a commercial compost facility in your area, you could arrange for waste collectors to transport waste to the appropriate facility. In areas where there is no facility, it is still advisable to follow a plastic free practice as this demonstrates a commitment to reducing plastic pollution in the environment if the event generates litter. This also prepares vendors, stall holders, attendees for when it is available and established in the future.



GUIDELINES IN PRACTICE

BEHIND THE SCENES

Event organisers should ensure their office and back of house practices meet the same requirements and avoid the use of single-use plastics to the best of their ability. This should include securing fixtures, on-site facilities, crowd control measures, check in desks.

WASTE MANAGER

We recommend considering the engagement of an on-site Waste Manager, particularly for larger events or where litter and waste management may be challenging.

SORTING OF WASTE

Material collection stations should focus on a three-bin system for compost, recycling and waste, subject to composting services being available. Clear signage is essential, utilising clear symbols and images is most useful. To ensure correct use it is advisable to place volunteers at bin stations to show the correct usage and ensure effective and timely collection of full bins.

DATA IS ESSENTIAL FOR IMPACT

Data collection is essential to monitor performance and improve services. It is recommended that data is kept on quantities of materials sent for recycling, composting and waste. Your waste collectors should be able to provide this data. Monitoring compliance by vendors is also important. Surveys of public sentiment and understanding will improve collection services, signage and public education programs.



A QUICK GUIDE TO PLASTIC FREE EVENTS



Advertise and promote the events as Single Use Plastic Free!



Require all vendors to supply only reusable or 100% compostable foodware (Australian standard or equivalent) to their customers at the event (plates, cups, utensils, containers etc). Do not permit decorations like balloons to be used or released.



Provide a water station or water refill points on site for refillable bottles.



Provide recycling, composting (where applicable) and waste bins on site.



Good and clear signage is essential. Ideally provide bin monitors to explain how the system works.



Arrange for your waste service to transport collected materials to appropriate facilities and provide waste data.



Review data and management arrangements on the plastic-free outcomes and set new improved requirements for future events.

SINGLE USE MATERIALS

What's the difference between compostable, biodegradable and degradable? Which one should you be using?



MATERIAL	SOURCE / BASE INGREDIENT	DURABLE FOR PACKAGING	DISPOSAL METHOD	BIODEGRADABLE
Plastic	Petrochemicals	Yes	Ideally recycled usually landfill	No - remains plastic or breaks into micro-plastics (lasting forever)
Biodegradable or Bio-plastic	Plant cellulose / corn starch	Yes	Ideally Industrial composting usually landfill	Not without special industrial treatment
Bagasse	Sugar cane pulp	Yes	Can be industrially composted, often landfilled	Yes home compostable
Bamboo / Wood	Bamboo plantation	Yes	Can be home or industrially composted, often landfilled	Yes
Paper / Cardboard	Wood pulp/ recycled paper / trees	Limited, depends on usage & conditions	Can be recycled if not contaminated, can be composted	Yes
Home Compostable Packaging	Crustacean shell, mushroom fibre, seaweed	Intentionally yes, still being tested	Designed for home compost / to be highly degradable	Yes, designed to be highly degradable, will enrich soil



Dont forget, REUSABLE is best! #helloby



Accreditations & Certifications to look out for when purchasing

Bioplastics & Home Compost

Cardboard & Paper



SUPPLIERS

GUIDE TO SINGLE USE ALTERNATIVES

There are a number of retailers offering more sustainable alternatives to all the single use plastic items that you may require for your business (and the list is growing every day!)

We have created a range of supplier resources with some great suppliers to get you started. Whilst this list is by no means exhaustive (nor is any particular supplier endorsed) this is a great starting point for your business to discover some relevant alternatives based on your requirements.

These range from plant-based single use items, commercial and home compostables to reusable items as well as infrastructure / circular systems to further support the uptake of reusables.

They include everything from bottles, cups, straws, cutlery and bags to all types of packaging, trays and cling film.

You will find all our Supplier Resources at www.byebyeplastic.org.au/toolkits-resources/suppliers-resources/



Part of this document has been created with permission with information from the Boomerang Alliance Plastic Free Council and Community Guidelines and www.plasticfreeplaces.org



PARTNERS



SUPPORTERS

