



Event & Meeting challenge

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Objective

- Do not use single-use plastic¹ during events, ensure good waste separation and collection, step by step reduce remaining waste to become 'zero-waste' at festivals, markets, parties, games, tournaments and other events in your local community.

What can you do?

- Reduce plastic (and other) waste at meetings and events organized by your Rotary Club or by Rotary Cubs in your Region or District:
 - Stop using single-use plastic during events and ensure good waste separation and collection.
 - Step by step reduce remaining waste to become 'zero-waste' at festivals, markets, parties, actions, games, tournaments and other events.
- Reduce plastic waste at non-Rotary meetings and events organized in your local community: contact the organization or local government and ask to make a plan to become 'single-use plastic free' and 'zero-waste'.
- Focus is on publicity and awareness. Include campaigns for awareness with the general public, that they refuse to use single-use plastics, reduce plastics and separate waste to keep plastic out of our environment.

¹ Examples are straws, snack wrappers, ear sticks, cigarette filters, caps on coffee cups, balloons, snack wrappers, all decoration and stickers on presents, plastic plates, (ice cream) spoons, forks, knives, tooth picks and all plastic packaging.

How to start?

- Start to avoid single-use plastics at your own Rotary events and meetings.
- Add an EndPlasticSoup awareness action at (non-Rotary) events and festivals, e.g. a booth with information and tips how to reduce plastic.
- Keep it Simple, be pragmatic, what can be done this time.
- Do it step by step, event by event: just START doing, use the 80/20 rule and do the 'easier' 80% this time, and make a plan to the remaining improvements at the next event.
- Make a plan and organize the zero-waste: Plan, prepare, implement, measure and improve.
- Set objectives and measure results.
- Include additional budget to enable the use of alternatives.
- Involve all people involved in the event organization, volunteers, supplier, authorities, and agree the tasks of each one.
- Create clear communication about your objectives, criteria and guidelines.
- Involve and inform your venue location, local authorities, all suppliers, all catering, the waste management company, guests and visitors.
- Include the prevention of single-use plastic, 'zero-waste' objectives and the waste separation and collection objectives in supplier agreements. Suppliers and contracts terms need time to change, plan ahead and even include the objectives for the next event.
- Ensure publicity before, during and after, including pictures and an announcement of the result.
- Ensure publicity before, during and after including pictures and announcement of the results.

Tips to make an event zero-waste

- Start with your own events and meetings, be the example.
- Be pragmatic, use the 80/20 rule, just start doing, improve step by step, event by event.
- Involve suppliers and volunteers, ask them for ideas and concerns, agree solutions together.
- Communication:
 - Create communication, provide (online) training for your volunteers and visitors.
 - Use Social Media to create publicity.
 - Communicate to the general public and to visitors that the event becomes plastic-free and zero-waste, and ask visitors not to bring plastic bottles, no snacks with wrapping and drinking packages, but to take reusable water bottles and ensure no waste is left at the event.
- Include the complete system, including catering, suppliers (not to bring plastic), garbage collection, volunteers, cleaning staff and sponsors.
 - Encourage food vendors and stall holders to minimize packaging and ensure that any they use is either reusable or recyclable.
 - Provide food vendors with the opportunity to serve meals on reusable crockery that can be collected and washed at wash stations
 - Supply drinking water via mobile drinking fountains and encourage visitors to bring their own reusable water bottle to the event.
 - Ensure good communication for drinking fountains and waste collection, and clear directions and signs during the event.
 - Arrange a cleaning and waste processing schedule during and after the event.
 - Ensure agreements with cleaners and waste collectors are in place to keep waste separate during cleaning and collection. Contract waste processing with recycling in mind.
- Ensure a risk, issue and change process is in place and enable improvements, before, during (!) and after the event. Make volunteers responsible for specific tasks during the event and organize the management of risks, issues and changes.
- Consider the use of a Rotary Club specific Label to promote 'single-use plastic free' or 'zero-waste' meetings and events in your community.

Make a plan

1. Assessment:
 - Is a physical event or meeting required, what (part) can be done online, is it meaningful to reduce the duration of the event, or reduce the number of visitors?
 - How many visitors and exhibitors?
 - What kind of food, drinks are being offered?
 - How do exhibitors promote themselves?
 - Where will waste be generated?
2. Make policy to prevent waste:
 - Discuss what disposables will be used and stimulate the use of reusable bottles, refills, etc.
 - Align the procurement of products and materials with the possibilities for separation of waste collection
 - Prevent single-use plastics, packaging materials and promotion materials etc.
3. Ensure waste collection:
 - Ensure sufficient collection capacity (waste baskets...) for the different waste streams
 - Appoint a Waste coordinator to ensure timely emptying and cleaning Waste collection baskets
 - Align the waste transport to the waste collection at the event location.
4. Extra focus to communication:
 - Communicate the importance of a waste free and plastic free event in the media and in the communication to the visitors, make a sign on the ticket
 - Communicate to sponsors and exhibitors before and during the event.
 - Ensure clear communication, directions and signs where to find the waste baskets and to put the waste in the right baskets
 - Have 'waste collector persons' or 'Walking bins' walking around during the event for awareness
 - Promote the zero-waste element before and after the event.
 - Make an evaluation and publish the results in the media.

Use a runbook and improve it

- Before:
 - Set Zero-waste objectives and include budget.
 - Organize your team and cover all Zero-waste aspects.
 - Keep it Simple and use the 80/20 rule: focus on the 80% that is economic and pragmatic to reduce waste, pollution and energy.
 - Use local suppliers and local food, rent local.
 - Agree Zero-waste objectives with your venue, suppliers, partners and volunteers.
 - Contract no single use plastics.
 - Contract and ensure sorted waste processing and contract cleaning, and waste processing with recycling in mind.
 - Provide clear communication and training to suppliers, venue, partners, volunteers and visitors regarding the objectives and guidelines.
 - Ask attendees to bring their own water bottles, minimize paper, use electronic information.
 - Ban single use plastics; contract to prefer reusable service ware and require single use items be compostable. E.g. no plastic (name) labels, minimize information packages, offer production of reusable Booth material and decoration.
- During:
 - Create sufficient water refill locations.
 - Clear instructions for delegates to dispose compostable utensils in the recycle bin

- instead of the compost bin, signage on display near utensils and recycling bins.
- Record data during the event.
- Ensure there are sufficient waste baskets and make waste separation simple and clear.
- Ensure waste baskets are placed at clear and sufficient locations, have enough capacity/volume and are being emptied in time during the event.
- After
 - Formal debriefing and evaluation with all suppliers, venue, partners and volunteers.
 - Provide stories on best practices and share them.
 - Formally thank all parties and ensure you do not forget one.
 - Create a formal evaluation report including financials, stories, 'quotes' of feedback, best practices, lessons learned and tips. Share the report with all parties.
 - Ensure press coverage and use pictures to create messages on the Website and social media.
 - Measure results and lessons learned and update the Plan and Runbook for the next event.
 - Create Stories: evaluate what went well, what can be done better next time, lessons learned, and share them.
 - Involve the local authorities and waste management company regarding zero-waste opportunities.
 - Share your experiences and ideas with other Club members, Other Rotary Clubs and with EndPlasticSoup. Learn from others.

Waste management

Waste can have a tremendous impact on your environmental footprint. Planning is crucial to avoid surprises and offer good and viable alternatives. Defining a reduction and diversion goal will encourage your club(s) to achieve a specific result, help you improve year after year, and provide a sense of achievement. See data collection and audits for further information.

- Identify all possible sources of waste (logistics, vendors, attendees) to get the full pictures and seek for alternatives. *Example:* decoration, flyers, dishware and utensils, packaging, etc.
- Understand the types of waste (landfill or burned, recyclables, compostables, etc.), prioritize actions to rethink, reduce, reuse and recycle, and train staff and volunteers to help sort waste.
- Identify solutions and alternatives to reduce waste. *Example:* washable utensils.
- Know your local recycling and composting regulation, and health regulation that pertains to waste and cleaning. Sorting varies per location and permits may be required.
- Ensure all stakeholders are aware of your plan.
- Use reusable decoration, reusable banners, decorations made out of recycled materials.
- Arrange a cleaning and waste processing schedule during and after the event.
- Provide enough bins for the waste and recycling that is expected to be generated. You need to work out what waste streams you will provide (e.g.. general waste, plastic, metal, glass, paper and cardboard). Each bin and area should have a clearly labelled receptacle for each type of waste that will be separated.
- Display sorting stations with clear guidelines and graphics (use pictures for clarity) and train Rotarian Trash Talkers who can guide attendees, project partners, etc. sort out their trash.
- Help participants to make sustainable choices regarding giveaways and (promotion) materials, even when they leave the conference. E.g. use cotton bags, experience gifts, do not add dates so materials can be reused.
- Record data during the event: sort and tally waste during the event if possible; this will help you avoid going through the trash after the event. See data collection for further information.
- Contract and ensure sorted waste processing and contract cleaning, and waste processing with recycling in mind.

Catering

- Eliminate plastic water bottles, create sufficient water refill fountains, offer for sale reusable bottles.
- Ban single use plastics; avoid single use plastic bags, avoid single use plastics for packaging and promotional purposes, contract to prefer reusable serviceware and require single use items be compostable, no plastic straws, bottles, cutlery, no balloons. No activities that incorporate single use plastic items.
- Ask attendees to bring their own, drink bottles, keep cups and reusable bags.
- Food offered to be sourced locally, guidelines to serve vegetarian food, eliminate meat from the menu, use portion control to limit food waste. When serving vegetarian food, ensure the menu is delicious, creative and enticing. Menu card made by seed paper, food condiments served in bulk. Serve meals on reusable crockery that can be collected and washed at wash stations.
- Provide clear directions to water taps, and clear instructions for delegates to dispose compostable utensils in the recycle bin instead of the compost bin, signage on display near utensils and recycling bins.

Code of Conduct for Rotary Clubs

Discuss and agree a Club 'Code of Conduct' for Rotary events and meetings to become zero-waste at events and meetings:

Our Club will make a 'Zero-waste' plan for our own events, meetings and actions to:

- Stop using single-use plastic, reduce use of plastic and paper, procure alternatives, check for recycling practices.
- Include 'zero-waste' objectives into the event plan and runbook.
- Include budget to finance alternatives and pragmatic steps.
- Measure results, evaluate, and make step by step improvements for the next event, meeting or action.
- Create Stories, use publicity and share experiences, picture and lessons learned with other Rotary and Rotaract Clubs and the EndPlasticSoup organization to raise awareness and support improvements.

Measurement examples

| General | Waste management | Plastics & Paper |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Keep it simple | Measure waste total and per category | No use of plastic bottles and single use plastics |
| Ensure continuity of measures | % waste composted | % reusable and reused crockery and cutlery |
| Be pragmatic: 80/20 rule | % waste recycled | % biodegradable crockery and cutlery collected separately |
| Create Stories not just figures | % waste remaining | Reusable Booth Material, decoration |
| Learn, share and improve next time | No plastic water bottles | Number of Refill stations/attendee |
| Evaluate with vendors and event organization | Kilos of paper waste | Minimum use of paper brochures, no advertising material |

Checklist to become zero-waste

| Topic | Applicable Y/N | To improve | Good | Better | Best |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Planning | | No Zero-waste objectives | Some Zero-waste objectives | Zero-waste objectives + measurements | Zero-waste objectives + measurements + budget |
| Contracting | | No Zero-waste conditions | Some Zero-waste conditions | Zero-waste conditions + measurements | Zero-waste objectives + measurements + collaboration |
| Communication | | Limited communication and guidelines | Clear comm. on Zero-waste aspects | Clear consistent comm. before, during and after | Clear consistent comm. before, during and after + training + help |
| Food & Water | | No objectives no initiatives | Local food, water refill locations | Local food, no water bottles, no single-use plastic | Clear guidelines, agreements and results, no single-use plastic |
| Waste | | No objectives no waste separation | Waste separation & process | No single use plastic, no paper waste, reuse | 'Zero-waste' (max. 5% remaining) + improvements |
| During | | No consistency, incidents | Consistent process, no incidents | Clear signaling, checking, fixing, cleaning & help | As in 'blue' + Feedback gained, data collected |
| After | | No data, no evaluation | All data collected, evaluation | Report with all data and lessons learned | As in 'blue' + recognition, sharing + next time objectives |
| Total Score: | | Red: -1 points | Yellow +1 points | Blue +2 points | Zero-waste +3 points |