

# RECYCLING GUIDE

## FOR CHURCH EVENTS

### AS PEOPLE OF GOD WE ARE CALLED TO CARE FOR CREATION

God saw everything he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

(Genesis 1:31a)

You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell. (Numbers 35:34a)

All humanity is to care for God's good creation: the land, sky, waters, and all life that lives on the earth. Our actions today will determine if future generations will be able to live on our earth.

### OUR GENERATION IS MAKING MORE TRASH THAN EVER BEFORE

The average American tosses 2.7 pounds of trash a day which adds up to over 1600 pounds each year. Recycling is helping. However, the EPA reports that only 33% of municipal waste is being recycled. This is a small portion of the trash that is being generated.



## WE ARE A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

It is time for churches and congregations to step up and become examples of this care for God's world. Not only are we facing an ecological problem but also human justice issues are at stake. Discarded waste affects everyone but those who are poor and marginalized are the ones most likely to live near landfills and

incinerators. Pollution controls are not 100% effective. We are yet to learn exactly what is going into our air and water and the impact it will have on our health.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOUR CONGREGATION BEGIN BY RECYCLING AT CHURCH EVENTS.



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**REDUCE** Reduce the amount of trash created by thinking about what you purchase. The amount of packaging directly affects the amount of trash created.



**REUSE** Purchase reusable dishes, table cloths, and serving dishes to cut down on the amount of refuse created.



**RECYCLE** Check your local recycling options and **PLAN** to recycle everything you can. Be creative!

## THE GREEN TEAM

### 2-Fold Purpose of “Event Recycling”:

Raise awareness of the amount and its affect of the trash generated, and model practical and hopeful responses and actions.

**How Many:** 3 to 8 members can handle most dinners and other large outdoor events

### Responsibilities:

- Assist with planning and set-up;
- Assist persons as they dispose of their trash into various containers.
- While assisting with trash disposal gently engage participants in conversation around the need to reduce the amount of trash one is generating.
- Measure and take pictures of the amount of trash collected. This is for comparison over a number of events or in friendly competition with other churches.
- Move containers to proper location following event or make arrangements to take them to a center.
- Follow-up with announcements in church bulletins and newsletters about the results.

# MORE THAN JUST SETTING UP SOME BINS



THE RECYCLING PLAN BEGINS WITH .....

### WHAT IS TO BE SERVED AND HOW IT IS PRESENTED

The objective of recycling at any function should not only be to cut down on the waste produced but to make the congregation more aware of the trash they are generating. Planning for recycling should be part of the overall function planning. Start by thinking of ways to reduce the waste before the food is purchased. Work with those who will be cooking and serving to find ways to cut down on trash. Also find ways to show the congregation how much trash is being generated. Is less trash being generated as time goes by?

### BEFORE THE EVENT

- Obtain permission to work with the planning committee and set up a recycling system. You will need to find out who is in charge and meet with them or the planning committee to find out how the trash has been handled in the past; what will be served; and a suitable place to collect the waste. There are a lot of traditions attached to church functions so take these into consideration. Involve existing church groups when possible.
- Contact the local municipal solid waste department to find out exactly what can be recycled and how it is handled. Will you need to transport your recyclables to a center or will there be a pick-up?
- Is there an opportunity to recycle food scraps? Local farmers sometimes welcome food scraps for their livestock. Small amounts of food waste can be composted in a closed container if someone is willing to monitor it.
- Recruit and train the “green team”. The number of members depends on the size and length of the event. Give each member an identifying name tag, hat, or apron etc.
- Make posters for containers. Gluing or securing the items which are to be placed in that can onto the poster as well as using words or images is a good way to help people if they are sorting their trash.
- Gather the items needed for handling the trash such as trash cans, compostable garbage bags, gloves, and bin for food scraps.

## WASHING STATION

You may want to set up a hand washing station for Green Team members if the event is outside and not easily accessible for washing.

Provide rubber gloves and recycled paper towels for hand washing.

# Reporting results

It is important to share the results of the recycling effort with members of the congregation.

## Bulletin Announcements

## Posters

## Newsletters

## Website

### DAY OF THE EVENT

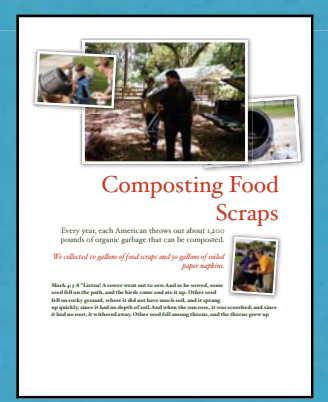
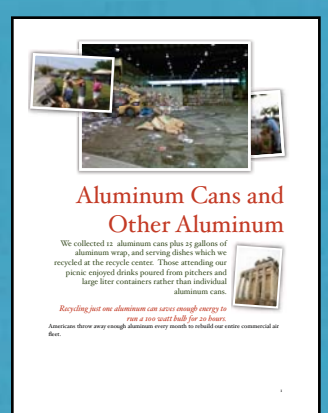
- Set up the Recycling Center with a garbage or recycling container for each item to be recycled. Line with biodegradable bags.
- Attach posters to the outside of the containers.
- Make sure there are no other garbage cans in the area so everyone will need to come to the recycling center.
- Set up or designate hand washing center.
- If possible, put a sign on each table reminding people that they will be asked to sort their trash. Each person should bring their own trash to the recycling center if possible. Parents and other helpful persons should check with a green team member for assistance before gathering all the plates, cups, etc and moving to the center. This will avoid a big mess of trying to sort numerous items while balancing them with one hand.
- As persons finish eating and bring their trash to the center, green team members will show them the different containers and assist when necessary.
- For dinners green team members can clear the places and properly sort the trash.

### CLEAN UP

- Bags will need to be removed from the cans or containers and the amount in each measured. If you know the bag is a 50 gallon bag it is easy to eyeball the amount: (1/2 bag = 25 gallons, 1/3 bag = 16 1/2 gallons etc.) If using paper plates, stack them, take the picture (for effect) and then measure in feet.
- Bags containing trash which cannot be recycled are taken to the dumpster or garbage area. Localities usually don't have commercial composting facilities needed for paper that has been soiled with food. Check to see what your facility will handle. If this is the case all soiled napkins, paper plates etc will need to go into the waste stream but it is good to measure and take pictures separately so the congregation will learn just how much of everything is being thrown away.

### AFTER THE EVENT

- Report the amount of trash that was generated and the amount recycled to church members in the bulletin or newsletter with pictures and reasons why we need to recycle and reduce waste.



**POSTERS USED TO REPORT RECYCLING RESULTS FOR ST. CECILIA CATHOLIC CHURCH ANNUAL PICNIC**



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# Planning Your Church Event Recycling

USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDE TO PLAN RECYCLING FOR YOUR EVENT  
BEFORE THE EVENT

		PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Meet with the Event Planning Committee and obtain cooperation with the recycling effort	Date of event: Person In Charge:	
Determine what will be served and how much of it will be recycled.	What is being served?  How will it be served?  What can be recycled?	
Meet with members of the GreenTeam to explain purpose of the effort and assign duties.		
Gather needed supplies	Garbage bags Rubber gloves Name tags Other	
Make posters and signs		

## DURING THE EVENT

Set up Recycling Center and check area for any stray garbage or recycling containers		
Put up signs		
GreenTeam assists with sorting the recyclables		
Remove bags from containers and take pictures.		
Take recyclables to proper place for pick up or to a recycling center.		

## AFTER THE EVENT

Report to church members amounts recycled	Bulletin, WEB, newsletter, other	