

zero waste event guide

A practical guide for waste elimination and
litter prevention at Victorian events



Barwon South West
Waste & Resource
Recovery Group

reduce – recycle

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices. We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

COLLABORATION

This project is a collaboration led by Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group and supported by Bellarine Catchment Network Caring for our Bays. The Zero Waste Event Guide was developed after both organisations identified a gap in guidance, approaches and shared resources for event waste management and litter prevention following years of work with events in the region.

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Introduction

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The **purpose of the Zero Waste Event Guide (the Guide)** is to help event organisers, land managers and patrons eliminate waste and prevent litter at Victorian events of all sizes and types, regardless of their duration, location, number of patrons or setup.

The Guide uses a simple step by step process of best practice and key options to consider in the planning, delivery and evaluation of events to eliminate waste. It also highlights successful waste management strategies used in case studies of events within the Barwon South West region.

According to the [Barwon South West Regional Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan](#), the cost of litter management for local governments in Victoria is estimated at over \$78 million per year. While [Recycling Victoria: A new economy](#) presents a 10-year circular economy policy and action plan to fundamentally transform the state's recycling sector, this Guide aims to share practical solutions for Victorian events to contribute to waste elimination and litter prevention now and in the future.

Following the [Victorian single use plastics ban](#), a range of single use plastics are illegal in Victoria from 2023. This Guide provides information on how events can make the transition away from single use plastics and considers the economic and logistical aspects of alternative options.

The objectives of this Guide are to provide best practice information, resources and templates to:

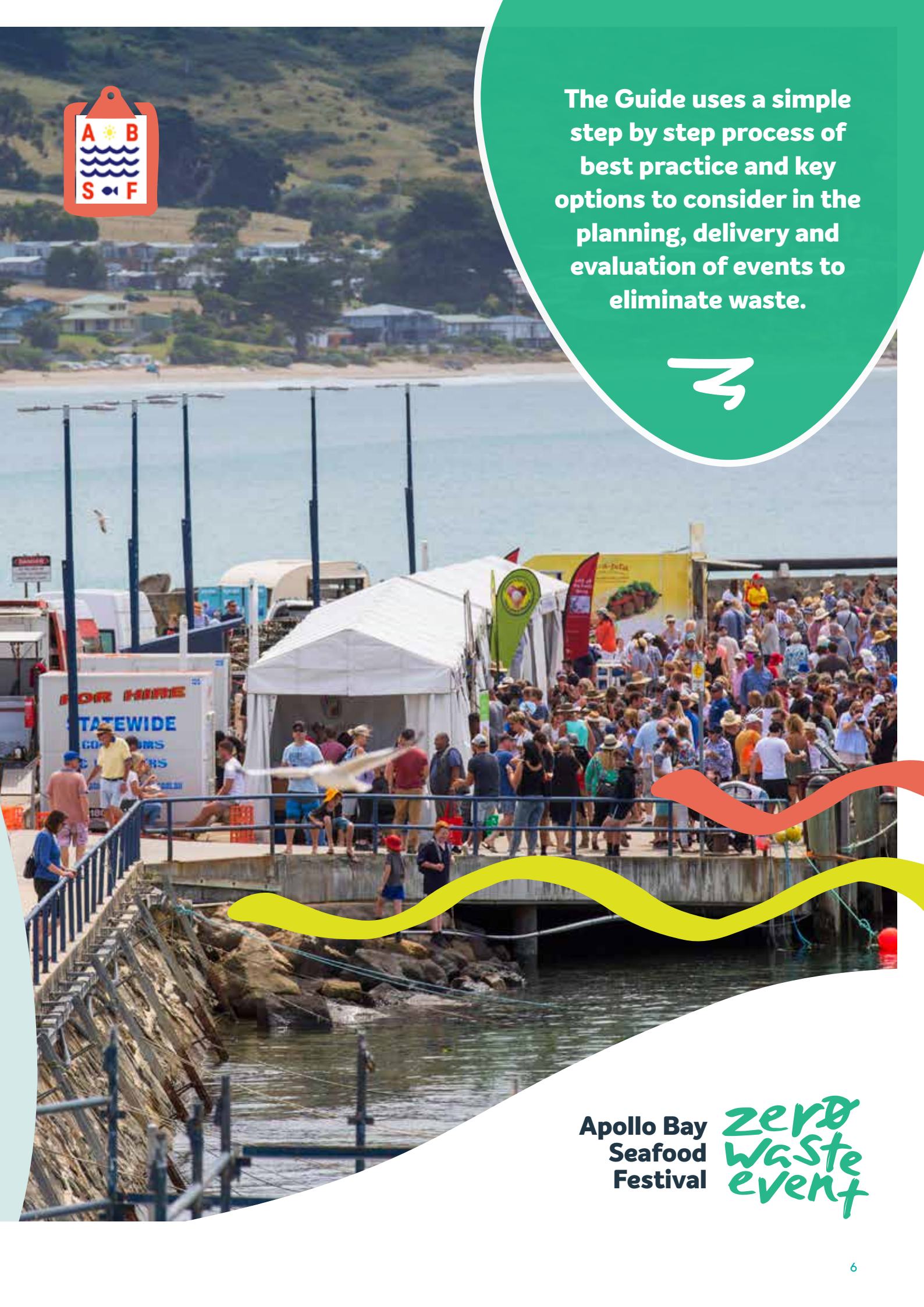
- **Eliminate waste and prevent litter at events, specifically plastic and fast food packaging**
- **Reduce waste generation**
- **Increase resource recovery from waste**
- **Improve community education on waste elimination and litter prevention.**

This Guide is a key tool in successfully transitioning to more sustainable and eco-friendly events that can continue to be enjoyed by the community for years to come.





The Guide uses a simple step by step process of best practice and key options to consider in the planning, delivery and evaluation of events to eliminate waste.



Apollo Bay
Seafood
Festival

zero
waste
event

Top Tip:

Zoos Victoria developed a short video, *When balloons fly, seabirds die* to outline the impact of balloons in our environment on precious wildlife. This resource can be used to help educate others on the unintended consequences of common types of waste produced at events.



Reusable cups are a great way to eliminate waste at events.



WHY ARE ZERO WASTE EVENTS IMPORTANT?

Litter in our environment is harmful to humans, animals, plants and soils, and often finds its way to rivers and oceans via stormwater flows where it causes further significant damage to our ecosystem.

Preventing litter from entering the environment is a major focus in the Barwon South West region, which covers approximately 800km of coastline. As many of the region's sporting, community and cultural events take place along the coast, this Guide focuses on how event organisers can prevent litter by considering waste generation and behavioural change impacts.

To capture and recognise the region's existing efforts, knowledge and skills on event waste elimination and litter prevention, the development of this Guide involved extensive consultation via a survey, interviews, case studies and a workshop with event and land managers. This consultation was key to informing the structure and content of this Guide.

While events are proportionally small waste generators, they are big influencers in changing waste management behaviour. One of the biggest drivers for change in the events sector is a desire to improve the environment. Events also provide a valuable mechanism for engaging and informing the community. Combined, these are strong components for effective action in waste elimination and litter prevention.

An example of the amenity that can be achieved from a progressive approach to zero waste events.

This Guide also provides examples of other benefits to zero waste events including:

- **Improved amenity of the event**
- **Reduced costs or neutrality**
- **Increased patron appreciation**
- **Reduced pack-down time after the event.**



WHO NEEDS TO CONSIDER A ZERO WASTE EVENT?

A zero waste event is the responsibility of all land managers and event organisers, with patrons increasingly expecting more sustainable approaches to reduce the impact of events on the environment.

As events are closely linked to experience and value, poor waste management and excessive litter can diminish the overall event experience and add increased costs to patrons.

All decisions of event operators, land managers and patrons need to:

- **Make environmental sense**
- **Make economic sense**
- **Make community sense**
- **Make COVID-safe sense.**

Reducing waste generation has become a focus in all aspects of Australian industries, both in recognition of the potential repercussions of waste and the economic value that could be captured by resource recovery and circular design.



The [National Waste Policy 2018](#) committed to a hierarchy approach to waste management with a goal of a resilient circularity for Australian waste (see Waste Hierarchy diagram on page 10)

The supporting [Action Plan 2019](#) outlines targets for 2030, including banning the export of recyclables (to stimulate an Australian industry), a 10% reduction of waste, an 80% increase in waste recovery, and halving organic waste sent to landfill.

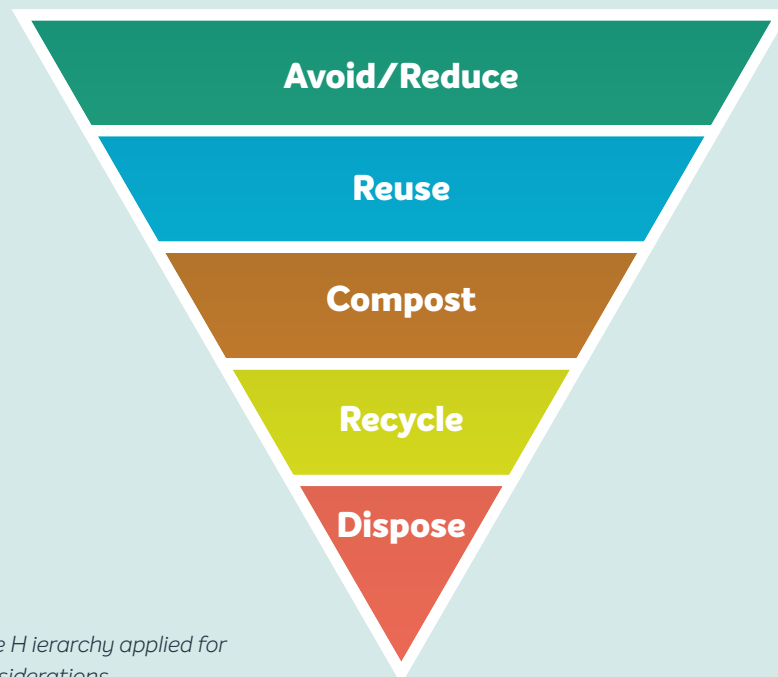
The use of plastic straws, cutlery, plates, stirrers and expanded polystyrene food and drink containers are illegal in Victoria from 2023, following the [Victorian single use plastics ban](#).

Fact:

58% of land and event managers in the Barwon South West region believe they put in a high level of effort into minimising waste at events. This suggests that there is good awareness and commitments throughout the region for managing event waste better.

Source: Zero Waste Event Guide survey undertaken by RMCG in September 2020.

The Waste Hierarchy



The Waste Hierarchy applied for event considerations.

Avoid/Reduce:

- What can be avoided?
- Can you replace plastic drinking bottles with an alternative?
- Can you eliminate plastic bags and straws?
- Can you reduce portion sizes?

Reuse:

- Can you introduce reusable cups for hot and cold drinks? What about crockery?
- Can you design your site with material that can be reused or repurposed?
- Can your construction contractors consider reusable building material?

Compost:

- Can you introduce a compostable service for food scraps?
- Can you ensure all packaging is compostable if reusable is not an option?
- Do you have access to a composting facility that will accept the waste stream compositions?
- Is there a local option?

Recycle:

- Who collects your recycling?
- What material will they actually recycle?
- Can you ensure source separation into aluminium and steel rather than commingle?

Dispose:

- What is left?
- How can this be avoided next time?
- What can you do to look for alternatives?

How to use this Guide

This Guide provides information on zero waste events across three key phases – **planning, delivery and evaluation.**

Each chapter includes an overview, best practice steps and key considerations, as well as references to other relevant tools and templates. Case studies and survey results also provide practical insights and tips from event managers of sustainable events across the Barwon South West region. The templates, fact sheets and tools included in this Guide are downloadable as separate, easy to use resources from www.reduce-recycle.com.au



Planning phase



GO TO THIS SECTION

-
- Step 1:** Set targets
 - Step 2:** Estimate quantity, type and source of waste
 - Step 3:** Design site layout
 - Step 4:** Choose infrastructure – bins, skips and logistics
 - Step 5:** Research and engage waste service providers
 - Step 6:** Create a stallholder’s covenant and engagement plan
 - Step 7:** Budget and staff allocation
 - Step 8:** Develop a communication and education plan
 - **Relevant resources**
 - [Waste at events in the time of COVID-19](#)
 - [Council zero waste event policy](#)
 - [Zero waste event action plan](#)
 - Bin signage
 - [Communication and education plan](#)
 - [Reusable cups and crockery considerations](#)

Delivery phase

GO TO THIS SECTION

.....

Step 9: Site set up, training and induction

Step 10: Stallholder engagement and assessment program

Step 11: Capture the event

- **Relevant resources**
- [Stallholder assessment check](#)
- [Site assessment and litter and bin monitoring](#)
- [Patron questionnaire](#)



Evaluation phase

GO TO THIS SECTION

.....

Step 12: Waste audit and data

Step 13: Summarise what was captured during the event

- **Relevant resources**
- [Waste audit and data sheet](#)
- [Event evaluation and report outline](#)



Quick guide for waste-smart choices



AREA (must be COVID-safe)	Level 1 (Gold)
Event waste elimination planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a <u>zero waste target and plan</u> • Communicate your target with <u>local Council</u> • <u>Communicate your target</u> with all contractors and stakeholders • Commit funding to infrastructure and resources to reduce waste, monitor change and engage and educate patrons and stallholders.
Cups and drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all cups are <u>reusable</u> or ask patrons to bring cups for reuse • Provide appropriate wash station set up • Ensure no single use plastics (drink bottles, straws or stirrers) • Provide water refill station.
Cutlery, crockery and take away items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all cutlery, crockery and take away items are <u>reusable</u> • Provide appropriate wash station set up • Ensure no single use plastics (sachets, cutlery).
Back of house bin configuration	<p>Cover the following waste streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compostable • Soft plastics • Cardboard • Glass • Polystyrene • Aluminium • Steel cans • Oil • Batteries • Pallets • Plastic straps (used in pallets).

LOOK-UP TABLE

How do you know if your zero waste event is on the right track?

Use the quick guide below to better understand your current rating (with Level 1 the recommended standard for a zero waste event) against a range of key event areas, such as waste elimination planning,

cups and drinks, bin configuration, as well as monitoring and evaluation. You can then use the relevant chapters in this Guide to improve your practices and move to the next level.



Level 2 (Silver)

- Create a [litter and waste minimisation plan](#)
- [Start a dialogue](#) with contractors and stakeholders to investigate improvements
- Develop [stallholder engagement and compostable covenant](#)
- Implement a 3-bin service (landfill, recycling and compost).

- Provide certified compostable paper or bioplastic cups
- Provide recyclable cups, made from recycled material where possible
- Provide reusable cups for hot drinks only (i.e. tea and coffee).
- Ensure no single use plastics (expanded polystyrene cups, drink bottles, straws or stirrers)

Ensure all cutlery, crockery and take away items are compostable:

- Straws, serviettes, stirrers
- Wooden/bamboo/compostable cutlery
- Plates, shells, trays, paper bags.
- Ensure no single use plastics (plates, cutlery, expanded polystyrene containers etc.)

Cover the following waste streams:

- Compostable
- Commingled
- Landfill.



Level 3 (Bronze)

- Understand what waste material your event will generate
- Create a stepped plan and achieve a new goal every year
- Commit to offering recycling and landfill bins to minimise litter and maximise collection of recyclable material.

- Provide recyclable cups, made from recyclable material where possible
- Offer coffee cup recycling.
- Ensure no single use plastics (expanded polystyrene cups, drink bottles, straws or stirrers)

Ensure all cutlery, crockery and take away items are recyclable, cardboard or compostable.

- Ensure no single use plastics (plates, cutlery, expanded polystyrene containers etc.)

Cover and the following waste streams:

- Commingled
- Landfill.

AREA (must be COVID-safe)	Level 1 (Gold)
Front of house bin configuration	Cover the following waste streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass only • Commingled and/or bin for containers eligible for refund (when introduced) • Compostable • Include fewer bin stations throughout the venue.
Event infrastructure and packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all event infrastructure and packaging can be reused or hired • Invest in long-term infrastructure that can be used for future events where possible • Ensure all construction material is reusable (e.g. reusable cable ties).
Engagement, education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induct contractors, staff, volunteers and stallholders in the services available and the event's zero waste targets • Provide informative bin signage • Develop a <u>communication and education plan</u> and maintain messaging in the planning, delivery and evaluation phase of the event • Engage and educate patrons at staffed bin stations • Monitor and check stakeholder behaviour • Capture feedback and <u>survey patrons</u>.
Monitoring and evaluating your efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey patrons, stallholders, contractors, staff and volunteers • Conduct a <u>site assessment</u> • Conduct <u>waste audits</u> • <u>Evaluate your efforts</u> and report findings of the waste audit, site assessment and survey results.



Level 2 (Silver)

Cover the following waste streams:

- Compostable
- Commingled and/or bin for containers eligible for refund (when introduced)
- Landfill.

- Hire reusable event infrastructure where possible
- Ensure no event infrastructure or packaging becomes litter.

- Ensure staff and volunteers know what options are available to minimise and eliminate waste and prevent litter
- Provide informative bin signage
- Communicate your zero waste plans during and after the event
- Capture feedback where possible.

- Capture conversations with patrons, stallholders, contractors and volunteers
- Take photos of the site and bin content
- Record and analyse what waste was captured for potential future improvements.

Level 3 (Bronze)

Cover the following waste streams:

- Commingled and/or bin for containers eligible for refund (when introduced)
- Landfill.

- Ensure any single use construction material can be recycled or reused.

- Ensure staff and volunteers know what options are available to minimise waste
- Provide informative bin signage.

- Capture staff and volunteer feedback
- Take photos of the site and bin content
- Record challenges and potential improvements.

Fact:

This quick guide can be used to effectively manage some of the major challenges involved with running events. For the Barwon South West region, this includes:

- **Bin contamination**
- **Having enough staff to oversee waste operations**
- **Ensuring staff, contractors and stallholders are following procedures**
- **The difficult and time-consuming nature of monitoring and evaluation.**

Source: Zero Waste Event Guide survey undertaken by RMCG in September 2020.



UNDERSTANDING WASTE AND EVENT JARGON

Having trouble understanding what all the waste and event jargon means? Use the below glossary to improve your understanding in a quick and easy way.

TERM	MEANING
Back of house (BOH)	The area of a venue/event not accessed by patrons but used for serving the operational aspects (e.g. food and drinks).
Biodegradable plastics Bioplastics	<p>Plant-based plastics or fossil-fuel derived plastics with microorganisms that can facilitate decomposition. It's important to remember that the decomposition of fossil-fuel derived plastics will result in microplastics.</p> <p>Generally plastic made from plant-based material such as rice, sugarcane, or corn are called bio-based plastics and can also be labelled biodegradable, without having the compostable certification.</p> <p>Note: Biodegradable cannot be used as a proxy for compostable.</p>
Certified Compostable   <small>Source: Australasian Bioplastics Association.</small>	<p>Biodegradable products made from material that can be composted to meet one or both Australian Standards for compostable packaging. These Standards define products that are capable of decomposing in two composting processes: AS4736 – <i>Compostable in commercial settings</i> and AS5810 – <i>Home compostable</i>.</p> <p>This compostable packaging is defined by its certification. It can be made of bioplastics, wood, bamboo, banana leaf, cardboard or paper. It can include cups with lids for hot drinks, clear cups for cold drinks, plates, bowls, shells, cutlery, straws and stirrers.</p> <p>Paper, wood, cardboard or leaf based compostables can be easier for composters to accept.</p> <p>Note: The confusion and difficulty to differentiate bioplastics from other plastic can lead to reluctance from composters as well as patrons. Therefore, look for products labeled with the AS symbols to give your composters and patrons confidence that the products are certified compostable.</p>
Compostables	Includes certified compostable material and organic material that decomposes naturally, such as food scraps, tissues, cardboard, leaf and garden material. Such material does not require a certification to be integrated into a composting process.
Commingled	<p>The waste stream that collects all recyclable material together. What can and cannot be included in a commingled stream can vary between councils and collection and processing contractors.</p> <p>Traditionally it includes paper, cardboard, plastics, aluminium, steel and glass. As the regulations around commingled recycling can change, always check with your processor about what they will accept.</p>
Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)	<p>A scheme whereby any eligible container can be returned for a small refund. Containers include aluminium, glass, plastic and paper based drink containers.</p> <p>Note: This waste will become a valuable resource at an expected 10c a unit. A CDS is also a source of income for community groups in states where a scheme exists.</p>

Degradable	Often used on plastic material (commonly bags, in an attempt to greenwash the product). Chemical additives are included in the plastic which allows it to deteriorate more rapidly, however the product will break up into millions of microplastics particles.
Food organics and garden organics (FOGO)	Includes food and garden waste such as kitchen scraps, lawn clippings, small branches and garden debris.
Front of house (FOH)	The area of a venue accessed by patrons and visitors.
Shrink wrap	Transparent plastics that shrink tightly onto packaging, such as cling film.
Soft plastics	<p>A wide range of flexible, scrunchable plastics which may include several linings, colours and textures.</p> <p>Soft plastics recycling can be a mine field and the reality is that there is no one rule to define what can and cannot be recycled. It will depend on the service collector and the processor.</p> <p>Broadly, two types of collection services of soft plastics at events are common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A soft plastics collection of bags, wrapping and film • A commercial collection of bulk material such as pallet film wrap and ice bags. <p>It is important that soft plastic is not contaminated with food residues, plastic tags or staples. Note: Remember to exclude biofilms from soft plastics recycling.</p>
Single use plastics	<p>Any material made of plastic (recyclable or non-recyclable) that is designed to only be used once. Traditionally this includes food and drink items such as water bottles, take away cups (for hot and cold drinks), plates, bowls, cutlery, straws, bags, plates and wrap.</p> <p>For event settings also consider cable ties, balloons, glitter, glow sticks, confetti, name tags and any giveaways (magnets, stickers etc.).</p> <p>Following the Victorian single use plastics ban, plastic straws, cutlery, plates, stirrers, expanded polystyrene food and drink containers and cotton bud sticks are illegal in Victoria from 2023.</p>
Polylactic Acid (PLA)	A plastic substitute made from fermented plant starch.
Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET or PETE)	A common clear plastic used in semi-rigid packaging such as soft drink bottles, berry containers and biscuit trays.
High Density Polyethylene (HDPE)	A common often milky or opaque coloured container used for milk, yoghurt and personal care items.
Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE)	A common plastic that can be both semi-rigid and soft. It can include items from plastic bags or films to tubs and trays.
Liquid paperboard (LPB)	<p>A composite material that includes a paperboard structure with a plastic and sometimes aluminium lining. It is commonly used for long-life drinks (milk, juice).</p> <p>Note: While 100% recyclable in theory, the Australian setting does not warrant volumes high enough for the equipment and facilities needed to recycle this product. Therefore, if your recycler collects it, it will either be sent overseas to be recycled as composite carboard or sent to landfill.</p>
Stallholders	Includes all vendors or anyone who has a stall at your event offering services such as food, drinks, items to purchase, collateral etc. Stallholders can be included back of house or front of house.

Running a zero waste event

PLANNING PHASE: BEFORE THE EVENT

This section of the Guide will help you with the following steps when planning your event.

- STEP 1:** SET TARGETS
- STEP 2:** ESTIMATE QUANTITY, TYPE AND SOURCE OF WASTE
- STEP 3:** DESIGN SITE LAYOUT
- STEP 4:** CHOOSE INFRASTRUCTURE – BINS, SKIPS AND LOGISTICS
- STEP 5:** RESEARCH AND ENGAGE SERVICE PROVIDERS
- STEP 6:** CREATE A STALLHOLDER'S COVENANT AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN
- STEP 7:** BUDGET AND STAFF ALLOCATION
- STEP 8:** DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION PLAN.





Fact:

A waste management plan is required by

81%

of organisations in the Barwon South West region.



Source: Zero Waste Event Guide survey undertaken by RMCG in September 2020.

STEP 1: SET TARGETS

Setting targets will connect your event's actions to outcomes and enable change to be measured over time.

When setting targets, use the SMART diagram below as guidance. Targets may also assist with resource allocation – that is, you may choose to stage your approach to what is achievable and viable within each timeframe.

Key Considerations

ATTRIBUTES TO CONSIDER IN TARGET SETTING	EXAMPLES
Total material generation (avoid and reduce)	By [insert year], reduce landfill waste by 50%, from current generation.
Increase recovery rates (recycle and reuse)	By [insert year], 95% of the event's total waste generation will be recycled or composted.
Contamination (avoid and reduce)	By [insert year], reduce contamination of commingled/organic stream to 2% or less, from current contamination rates.
Litter (avoid and reduce)	By [insert year], reduce the number of items collected during/after an event by 90%.
Eliminate single use plastics	List the single use plastic items that are banned from front of house and/or back of house use

SMART goal target setting approach

S	M	A	R	T
SPECIFIC	MEASUREABLE	ACHIEVEABLE	RELEVANT	TIME-BOUND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State what you'll do • Use action words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a way to evaluate • Use metrics and data targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within your scope • Possible to accomplish, attainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes sense within your job function • Improves the event in some way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State when you'll get it done • Be specific on date or timeframe.

Source: 6 Paul J. Meyer 2003, *Attitude is everything if you want to succeed above and beyond.*

How did they do it?

Get some inspiration from the Queenscliff Music Festival's approach to setting targets >

STEP 2: ESTIMATE QUANTITY, TYPE AND SOURCE OF WASTE

Most waste is generated either front of house by patrons or back of house by site construction and stallholder food and drink preparation.



To gain an understanding of what and how much waste is created, consider these questions:

1. What activities does the event focus on (e.g. music, food and drinks, produce, animals, conference, exhibit, craft, sport)?
 - a. How will this impact the type of waste the event is likely to produce (e.g. retail/sales packaging, drink containers/gels, athletic tape)?
2. How much waste is likely to need management on-site (versus off-site)?
3. What are the sources of waste, both front of house and back of house if they are used (e.g. set-up/pack-down, contractors – construction, sound)?

Key Considerations

BACK OF HOUSE WASTE EXAMPLES

Exhibits: Cardboard, paper, plastic packaging, shrink wrap, wood waste (pallets), tape, cable ties, small e-waste and cords

Caterers: Food scraps, cardboards, plastic wrapping, containers (metal, plastics, liquid paperboard)

Bars: Citrus and garnish, plastic and glass bottles, cardboard, plastic wrapping

Agricultural show: Manure, straw.

FRONT OF HOUSE WASTE EXAMPLES

Food: Food scraps, plates, cutlery, containers, sachets, serviettes, stirrers, bags and wrappers (paper, soft plastic, hard plastic, foil)

Drinks: Bottles, cans, cups, lids, straws, stirrers, corks, coffee grinds

Printed material/show bags: Printed paper, leaflets, plastic wrapped objects, stickers, programs, maps and guides, name tags, giveaways, flags and streamers

Multi-day events: Campsite litter (tents and fold up chairs)

Specialised events: Individual and specialised events may generate unique equipment and waste (lines and hooks for a fishing event or swim caps for a swimming event)

Other: Weather and health related material (ponchos and sunscreen containers).

Top Tip:



Your waste collection contractor can help you estimate the waste that could be generated at your event based on their experience of other similar events. A general rule of thumb for estimating food packaging is 1 litre of material for each meal consumed.

A front of house waste generation example:

A 10,000 patron, three-day event where patrons are estimated to consume food 3 times a day could generate: $10,000 \times 3 \times 3 = 90,000$ litres of material.

STEP 3: DESIGN SITE LAYOUT

Whether your event is for 50 or 50,000 people, a site map is a handy tool for planning your waste services.

Consider the ‘hotspots’ where patrons will congregate and interact, sit and eat, or areas of heavy foot traffic such as the exit of a stage or stands, or the entry/exit of the venue or car park. Place bin stations (preferably staffed) in these areas and use clear and consistent signage.

Consider the following attributes on your site map and how they relate to your zero waste event.

Key Considerations

ATTRIBUTES	IMPACTS
Wash stations – access to water, power and drains	Impacts your washing infrastructure capacity. At the Apollo Bay Seafood Festival , access to plumbing was a challenge for event organisers to set up wash stations.
Waste storage areas – suitable access and a stable location (avoid a slope or gradient and windy areas)	Impacts your capacity for the type and size of back of house skips/bins, and ease of access for staff and collection vehicles to clear the material. A stable and enclosed area will ensure waste isn't tipped over or blown away.
Bin stations – positioning (fewer stations with more staff, ease of access for all abilities)	All bin stations should be easily accessible. Front of house bin stations should be strategically placed close to where waste is generated (i.e. food/drink areas) and/or at event entries and exits. Bin stations should also be close to high activity areas so patrons can easily access the waste services.
Bin stations – education (clear signage and attractive pathways)	Attractive and educational pathways to bin stations will encourage patron uptake, as well as the ability to see other patrons using the bin stations. Clear signage should also be used for back of house bin stations to avoid contamination of waste streams and ensure waste is collected appropriately.
Washing/drop-off stations – positioning, clear signage and educational opportunities	Requires servicing and significant logistical access for patrons and staff.

How did they do it?

Find out how the [Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market](#) is approaching wash stations for future events >

STEP 4: CHOOSE INFRASTRUCTURE – BINS, SKIPS AND LOGISTICS

You will need to consider waste infrastructure for your event, including the type and number of bins required in the public area as well as back of house services for larger gatherings.

The decision on what is suitable can be a function of waste generation and site layout design. Infrastructure should also consider signage and monitoring staff.

Key Considerations

FRONT OF HOUSE	BACK OF HOUSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of waste streams (compostable, aluminium, reusables, commingle etc) • Type and size of bins (wheelie bins/buckets/crates) • Number of bins required on site and for rotations • Design of bin signage for patrons • Bin monitoring staff (if used) • Movability of bins for servicing • Access between bin stations and back of house for servicing • Frequency of collection may determine size of bin or receptacle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of waste streams (compostable, aluminium, reusables, commingle, soft plastic, oil, polystyrene, pallets) • Type and size of bins/skips/bags • Available space for skips and collection servicing • Design of bin signage for staff • Access for stallholders and site serving staff.



How did they do it?

Explore the impact of staffed bin stations at the [Queenscliff Music Festival](#) >

STEP 5: RESEARCH AND ENGAGE WASTE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Each event will require different types of waste service providers and they may vary for each waste stream at your event. Examples include:

1. **An on-the-ground event waste facilitator who can help plan and deliver your event with infrastructure, staff and information**
2. **Collection contractors who hire bins and skips as well as collect and transport the material**
3. **Processors of the waste streams such as composters, recyclers and landfills.**

Finding the right fit of waste management service providers for your event is the key to success. It is also important to understand the amount (volume) of waste generated, the cost of separation and recovery and the viability of using that service. Eliminating waste and preventing litter in the first place is a key factor in waste elimination and downstream associated costs.

Depending on the scale of your event, an event waste facilitator may be cost-prohibitive.

A zero waste event action plan can be a good start to decide if any on-the-ground measures need to be considered.

Collection and processing contractors will vary depending on your local area, as well as the type of waste stream collected. Some key considerations for common waste streams include:

1. **Organics:** It is critical to know the composter and ensure the type of material you wish to use and collect can be processed at their facility. This is because not all facilities accept every product that is labeled with an AS certification. Keep in mind that collection methods can include community garden composting.
2. **Recyclables:** The more you can sort recyclables at your event (e.g. separating glass, cardboard and paper), the greater the material value for the processor. Keep in mind that collection methods can include local kerbside bin collections.

Key Considerations

STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CONTRACT ENGAGEMENT

1. Know your waste and communicate your aims and targets to all contractors.
2. Understand collection processes and opportunities for sorting waste into detailed streams.
3. Follow through and ensure the processors of recycling and composting can collect and sort the material.
4. Let your contractor know you expect the data of collected and processed material following the event and encourage communication to avoid contamination of waste streams.

Top Tip:

Many large-scale events will need to involve commercial operations and processes. Find out more about the [Apollo Bay Seafood Festival](#) and [Queenscliff Music Festival](#)'s challenges and successes in managing contractors.



STEP 6: CREATE A STALLHOLDER'S COVENANT AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Most event waste is generated by stallholders. Effectively engaging with them to help them move towards eliminating waste is a major opportunity (and challenge) that you will need to consider.

Stallholders can have a significant impact on waste avoided, generated and diverted at events, particularly if the event focuses on food or is a multi-day event where patrons

rely on stallholders for food and drinks. In addition to the key considerations listed below, the [stallholder assessment check](#) and the [communication and education plan](#) can help to increase your engagement with stallholders.

Think about what the benefits could be to the stallholder of generating less waste, and start the conversation there. For example siteholder fees could be reduced for zero waste stalls, due to the reduction in overall waste costs.

Key Considerations

WHAT TO CONSIDER?	HOW TO ADDRESS IT
Procurement of packaging	<p>What makes sense for your event and stallholder offering?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusables: Can you consider reusable cups or even plates? Will your event invest in purchasing reusable crockery and cleaning facilities? • Compostables: Does a compostable packaging line make more sense? Do you have a collection provider who services organics? Will the local composter take the material? Will stallholders have time to learn and accurately sort material? • Recyclables: Is your event more likely to stock drinks in cups (i.e. hot drinks), bottles (i.e. soft drinks) or cans (i.e. alcoholic beverages and soft drinks)? Are you required to by law? Is recycling likely to be more familiar and successful for stallholders?
Reusable cups and crockery choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to hire reusable items for your event through a local op shop, Country Women's Association or town hall? Or is it worth investing in these items? • Do you have facilities to wash on-site or can you organise a mobile wash station? Is there a local commercial kitchen nearby that could be used? • How do reusables work for each stallholder menu offering? Will you require bowls and plates/different sized cups? • How will the distribution, use and collection of reusables work?

WHAT TO CONSIDER?	HOW TO ADDRESS IT
Waste infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure what the stallholders are selling can be placed into the front of house waste services. Also, provide information and facilitate stallholders to organise waste sorting within the stall and ensure they are aware of the types and location of back of house waste services, which may include cardboard, oil, soft plastics etc. • Consider leasing/providing in-stall infrastructure in different sizes with clear and consistent colour coordination and wording.
Food and beverage menu	Depending on the food stall offering and length of your event, this could be more or less relevant for consideration. To minimise food waste, encourage a conversation with stallholders about portion sizes. To ensure supplier and ingredient packaging can be composted or recycled, it can be helpful to have a conversation about polystyrene, contaminated soft plastics and liquid paperboard.
Stallholder health and safety requirements	Ensure stallholders do not interact with patrons' waste (cups, crockery, recyclables or compostables). Make sure all practices are <u>COVID-safe</u> .
How, when and what to inform stallholders about	Repeat the message you want to promote about the type and location of waste services at your event. Share this information before stallholders apply for your event, when they become a contractor, at site induction, throughout the event and after it finishes.

How did they do it?

Read how the Freshwater Creek Steiner School Spring Fair worked with stallholders to minimise waste.



Top Tip:

Touch base with all stallholders when they arrive on-site and check all their packaging meets your requirements. You could even offer some back-up packaging, should there be an issue.



Bin Fairies at the Queenscliff Music Festival.

STEP 7: BUDGET AND STAFF ALLOCATION

A zero waste event can save costs and deliver a range of benefits, but it does need adequate resources.

To decide if your zero waste approaches are effective, it is helpful to consider how these investments can reduce the cost of previous approaches. For example, if there is a cost associated with the purchase of infrastructure or hiring reusables, this will also reduce the number of bins or skips hired and their collection frequency. Consider charging stallholders for the use of reusables to balance the cost saving for disposable packaging they will not require.

Key Considerations

Think about any services that could be undertaken by volunteers and community organisations such as a local club, beach patrol or service organisation. Otherwise, consider budgeting to include a manager and coordinator to plan and facilitate:

- Procurement of building materials (reusable, hire, recyclable, recycled)
- On-site sorting/screening
- Waste educators and bin inspectors (Bin Fairies/Waste Warriors)
- HR and communication
- Waste audit.



Top Tip

Contamination of waste streams is the biggest challenge for events in the Barwon South West region. Staffed, consolidated bin stations, such as the ones staffed by the Bin Fairies at the Queenscliff Music Festival (pictured left), are an effective way to address the issue and educate patrons on the correct placement of waste and recycling materials.

How did they do it?

Read the [Queenscliff Music Festival's approach to waste audits and relative resourcing](#) >

[The Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim](#) also had a great plan to share resources. [Read more](#) >

STEP 8: DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION PLAN

Changing your stakeholders' behaviour through increased engagement and adoption of practices is arguably the most powerful aspect of a zero waste event.

Capturing the attention of your patrons and showcasing good behaviour and the end results can deliver actual behavioural change throughout communities over time.

The [communication and education plan](#) can provide you with a template to apply some of these concepts to your events.

Key Considerations

WHAT TO CONSIDER?	HOW TO ADDRESS IT
<p>What should we say?</p> <p>Getting your key messaging tone and approach right for your event and your audience is critical.</p>	<p>Here are some tips for tone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement: "This is what we are achieving together", "Join the change", "Help us keep litter out/reduce waste/make compost" • Normalise behaviour and participation: "Everyone is doing this", "We are doing this together" • Contextual information: "Litter in the marine environment", "What happened to this?" • Celebrity reinforcement: Local leader, industry representative or local resident (child or family).
<p>When can we promote the message?</p> <p>It is important to take every opportunity to send your key messages to your target audience throughout the planning, delivery and evaluation stages of your event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the event: Any promotions and information conveyed before the event can include some key messages such as "We are a zero waste event" or more information about your approach to reducing waste. This can occur through the development of posters, essential information included with ticketing, in the event program and when people enter the site, as well as media promotion • During the event: Keep the momentum going by using informative signage, interactive installations and volunteers as well as including messages by the MC and stallholders at the point of sale • After the event: Communicate the results to staff, stallholders and patrons (how did it go, what was achieved) using social media, direct emails and broader media promotions (local newspaper etc.).



The Queenscliff Music Festival.

How did they do it?

Find out more about the approach to education used by the [Apollo Bay Seafood Festival](#) and the [Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market](#) >

Top Tip:



Surf Coast Shire Council developed a [Plastic Wise Events and Markets Policy](#) to ensure events align with the environmental values of the community.

Consider completing a [council zero waste event policy](#) to let your local council know of your plans and their obligations for your zero waste event >

Next steps



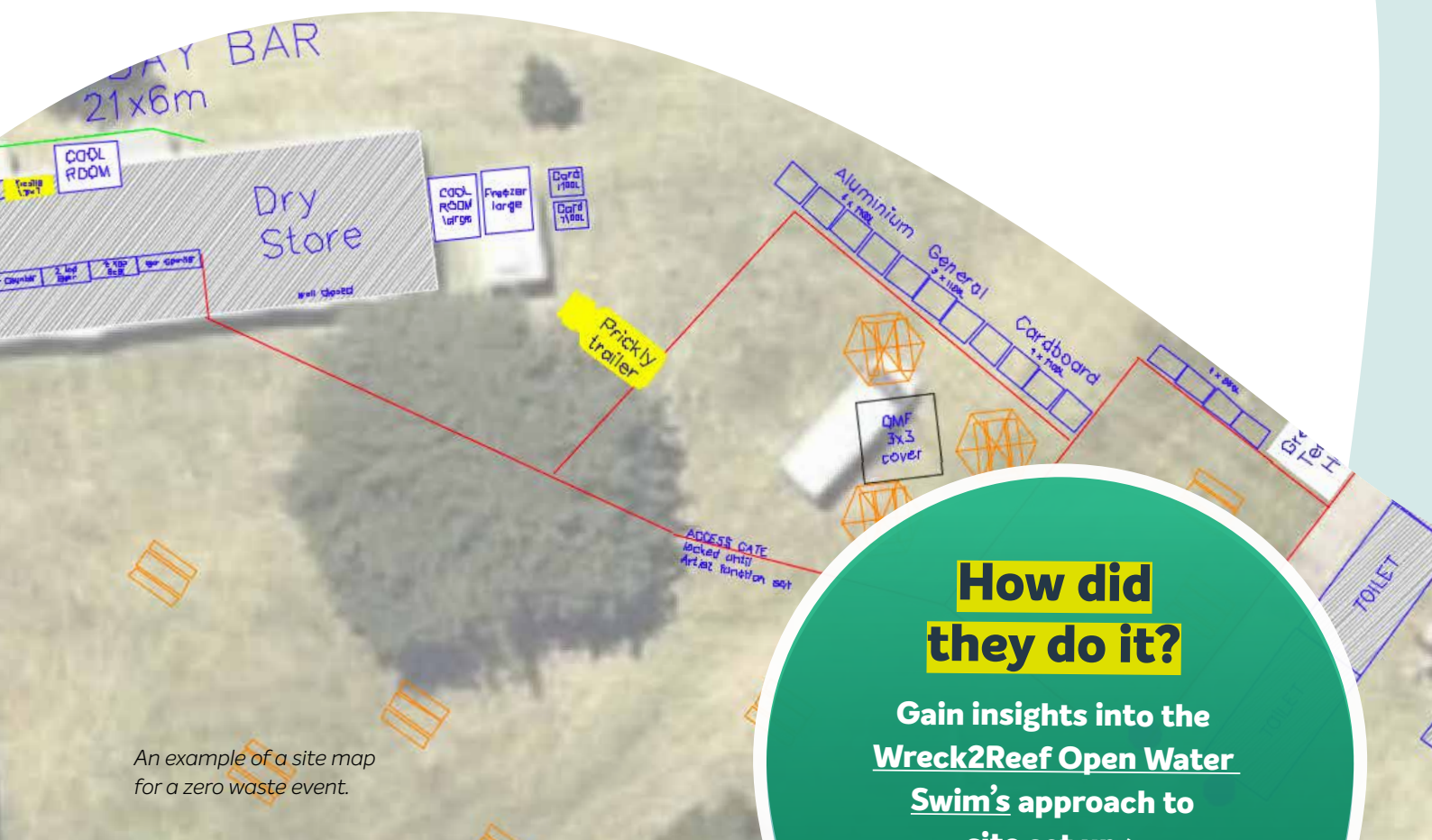
DELIVERY PHASE: SETTING UP AND DURING THE EVENT

This section of the Guide will help you with the following steps when delivering your event:

STEP 9: SITE SET UP, TRAINING AND INDUCTION

STEP 10: STALLHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

STEP 11: CAPTURE THE EVENT.



An example of a site map for a zero waste event.

How did they do it?

Gain insights into the Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim's approach to site set up >

STEP 9: SITE SET UP, TRAINING AND INDUCTION

When considering a zero waste approach during the set up or site building stage of your event, it is important to make sure any pre-event correspondence and a site map (if necessary) is ready for your stakeholders when they arrive on-site.

Key Considerations

- 1. Organise waste services early:** Set up all necessary waste services early and let your building, sound, security and stallholder contractors know how to use them correctly when they arrive on-site. This can be included in a site induction or briefing.
- 2. Set up bins and signage:** Set up the bin configurations and clear signage according to your site and infrastructure plan.
- 3. Deliver ongoing training:** In addition to any initial briefings, staff and volunteers should stay updated on your zero waste strategies when they arrive on-site and at the start of every shift (particularly if there are any unforeseen changes that need to be addressed).
Be sure to cover the zero waste targets of the

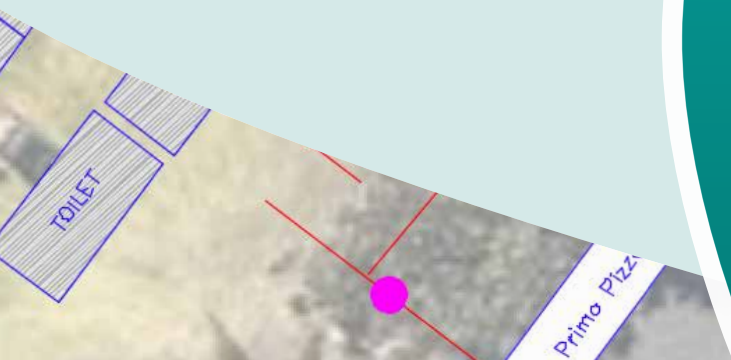
event, the strategies and approach, the bin stations (front of house and back of house) and what their role is and what it is not. Be clear about what you expect and make sure they are safe and supported.

4. Share your message:

Brief patrons upon entry about your zero waste targets and how they can help to achieve them. This can also be highlighted in a program or verbally as they arrive at your event.

Top Tip:

As volunteers work for free, they should not have any additional responsibilities beyond their shift. Make sure they know what is expected and validate their importance, show appreciation at every point of communication and ask for their feedback. This will build morale and encourage great volunteers to return to your zero waste event.



STEP 10: STALLHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Behavioural change takes place on the ground and over time. Following through with your commitment to a zero waste event will have a powerful impact on your stallholders' practices.

A simple stallholder engagement and assessment program may include:

- **Event staff checking in once at the start of the event to provide information on the location and range of zero waste services and field any questions**
- **Checking in once during the event to receive queries or help respond to issues**
- **Facilitating a post-event survey (in person or online).**

For larger events with a significant food and drink stallholder presence, a more advanced assessment program can be effective to achieve change over time. This could include:

- **A three-strike approach auditing in-stall practices, providing feedback and resulting in a score on their zero waste effectiveness (for example: green, orange, red)**
- **Sharing current audit/bin inspection results mid-event and identifying problematic material and/or behaviour**
- **Announcing awards or incentives for high achieving stalls.**

The [stallholder assessment check](#) provides an example of how you can record your approach.



STEP 11: CAPTURE THE EVENT

It's easy to get lost in the action of your event when it is underway, but it's important to keep track of how your initiatives unfold.

Make sure you have a plan to capture key findings, activities and successes as your event progresses, and take plenty of photos and video! Some other helpful tools include:

- **Stallholder assessment check**
- **Patron questionnaire**
- **Site assessment and bin monitoring (contamination level, time of day, capacity).**

Fact:

A two-bin system (recycling and landfill) is the most common type of waste service offered at events in the Barwon South West region. An additional third bin for compostables is the next most common service.

Source: Zero Waste Event Guide survey undertaken by RMCG in September 2020.



How did they do it?

Read about the approach to stallholder engagement taken by the [Trestle 10 Fun Run >](#)

Wrapping it up

EVALUATION PHASE: AFTER THE EVENT

This section of the Guide will help you with the following steps when evaluating your event:

STEP 12: WASTE AUDIT AND DATA

STEP 13: SUMMARISE WHAT WAS CAPTURED DURING THE EVENT.



STEP 12: WASTE AUDIT AND DATA

The aim of a waste audit is to establish a first-hand analysis of the type and amount of material collected following your event.

For example, for a compostable stream, you can find out the breakdown of straws/coffee cups/plates/shells/food scraps/contamination.

This information can also help you to make more informed decisions. For example, if your compostable stream is 60% coffee cups, the introduction of a reusable system could reduce your bin infrastructure, collection and processing costs by up to 60%.

The following key considerations outline how you can complete a waste audit. You can access the [waste audit template](#) which has a data collection sheet that can be printed and used in the audit for recording entries. This template also include tabs for analysing results. You can also use an [evaluation matrix](#) to check the success of your waste audit.

Key Considerations

1. Choose a sample size for larger events or audit your entire waste service for smaller events
2. Make sure staff are wearing Personal Protective Equipment (long sleeves, steel capped boots, gloves, masks)
3. Ensure an area is set aside for the waste audit, and has space for the material, sorting and disposal
4. Use a table to break open bags or sort small objects
5. Use buckets or a similar vessel to sort the waste material – check their weight/tare the scales
6. Put a full vessel on the scale and record the weight and estimate the volume. For example, if you're using a 10 litre bucket, the volume is 10 litres
7. Empty the vessel into a bin/skip for processing/disposal
8. Continue recording full vessels until the sample is fully sorted.



A small bag of waste collected from an event following an audit of residual waste generated.



An audited sample sorted into detailed categories.

If you are conducting a sample waste audit for a large event, you can then extrapolate the result to your entire waste service. Collection contractors will (and should) report the volume and weight of each stream they collect.

You can then use the material breakdown from the audit to estimate the diversion and avoidance opportunities. Tracking the event composition and total waste stream weights can help to measure your overall impact and level of behavioural change.

STEP 13: SUMMARISE WHAT WAS CAPTURED DURING THE EVENT

So, you planned your event, trained staff and educated patrons, measured waste streams and asked for feedback.

Remember to report your results, and most importantly, promote your key messages and achievements to all of your event stakeholders.

Some helpful resources include an [event evaluation and report outline](#) while communication approaches are considered in the [communication and education plan](#).

Top Tip:



Don't forget to communicate your results and findings back to staff, stallholders and patrons.

Seeing the outcomes and progress of an event they were involved in is a powerful way to instil behaviour change and continuous improvement.

Case studies



APOLLO BAY SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

EVENT SNAPSHOT

The Apollo Bay Seafood Festival (ABSF) is held in collaboration with the historic Apollo Bay Fishermen's Co-op during Harbour Day in mid-February. It aims to champion the spirit of the local fishing community and connect attendees with the industry and its fresh produce.

Attendees: 6,000

Duration: Three days

Prior to 2017, the ABSF was a small, popular event attended by the local community, with commingled recycling and waste options managed as a fundraising activity with local school children.

A change in festival management and a renewed drive to showcase sustainability in the fishing industry re-developed the aim and reach of the festival. In 2020, organisers aimed to create a zero waste event with a regenerative approach to waste.

THE APPROACH

- Reusable and compostable cups and crockery
- Four staffed, interactive and educational waste disposal stations
- Single use plastic items banned for stallholders and site construction workers (replaced with items such as reusable cable ties).

THE RESULT

- 1 x 120 litre landfill bin generated across the entire event which catered for 6,000 people (including the build, set up, operation and pack down). This is equivalent to one standard household kerbside bin
- Food scraps and compostables were taken to local schools for processing, where the material was then applied to school vegetable gardens
- Oyster, mussel and clam shells were collected and used in a reef reseeded regeneration project in Queenscliff
- Plastic sorted for recycling was collected for the construction of a table to be used at future events. While the amount of plastic collected at the 2020 festival was too little to make a table, it will be set aside for use with plastic collected from future events
- Learnings: While there was some initial confusion among patrons lining up to dispose of their food waste, staff explained the process of where to scrape food and place crockery. This eventually led to a quicker, smoother process and resulted in increased engagement and awareness among patrons, who showed support and appreciation for the initiative.

Apollo Bay
Seafood
Festival

zero
waste
event

Top Tips:



1. Scrutinise contractor principles

Find a contractor who shares your goals and can help facilitate the path to zero waste at your event.

2. Plan dishwashing set-up and waste sorting areas

These areas require electricity, plumbing and enough physical space, so consider this early in the planning process.

3. Communicate widely

Share your vision and the end result at every opportunity through media releases, interviews with local publications and social media.

The Apollo Bay Seafood Festival has a regenerative approach to waste.

“Without a sustainable approach, there is no future for this event or for the seafood industry.”

QUEENSCLIFF MUSIC FESTIVAL



EVENT SNAPSHOT

Held in late November, the Queenscliff Music Festival (QMF) is located on four hectares of coastal foreshore parklands presenting 150 performances across 14 venues. It is managed by four core staff and 500 volunteers.

Attendees: Up to 27,000

Duration: Three days

The QMF began in 1997 as a not-for-profit community organisation, with the aim to place Queenscliff on Australia's cultural map. The environment, culture and community are described as founding pillars of the festival.

Following recent changes in international recycling policy and markets, organisers realised that 94% of material processed at the event was sent to landfill. The high contamination rate of commingled material also highlighted that the festival's original waste management practices were no longer acceptable or sustainable.

The QMF launched its 'war on waste' in 2018 and developed two targets for the festival:

90% diversion of waste within one to two years and

95% diversion of waste within three to five years.

THE APPROACH

- The QMF Board engaged with festival stakeholders to share its 'war on waste' targets, gain support and critically explore which partners had the knowledge and enthusiasm to support and facilitate this path to waste minimisation
- The QMF analysed the festival's broader waste streams, including volume and material type. Using the Waste Hierarchy, the team looked for waste options that could be avoided. Single use plastic (drink bottles, straws, sachets and food packaging) was banned and bar menus were analysed for more efficient stock solutions such as beer and wine on tap
- The QMF also looked for tailored solutions to waste streams, where recyclability could be guaranteed through targeted sorting. Aluminium drink cans were used at the festival and collected as a single (rather than commingled) stream
- The waste audit found that food stalls generated the vast majority of waste material. To combat this, food packaging options were addressed using a trial approach over two years. Year 1 (2018) trialled compostable packaging while Year 2 (2019) trialled reusable crockery.

"It's not about money or control, it's about making a difference together."

THE RESULT

• Year 1: Compostable packaging trial

The QMF worked hard to find a suitable provider to process compostable packaging and help its 20 stallholders use packaging that was certified compostable. While a significant proportion of stallholders believed they were using compostable packaging, none satisfied the certification as they were using either biodegradable or partially compostable packaging. The QMF then ordered and distributed certified compostable packaging to all stallholders.

At the end of the trial, a diversion rate of 90% was achieved and all diverted streams were 100% recycled/composted.

• Year 2: Reusable crockery and cutlery trial

The key challenge in this trial revolved around balancing the investment needed for the infrastructure and operational servicing of reusable crockery and cutlery with a limited additional cost to patrons and stallholders. The QMF communicated to stallholders that the supply of reusable crockery and cutlery had a cost saving of approximately \$300, with a stallholder fee increase of approximately \$200. Given the reduced cost of other waste infrastructure and servicing such as recycling and compostables, the budget was reallocated to hire a commercial washing unit and supporting resourcing.

At the end of the trial, a waste diversion rate of 95% was achieved and compostable material reduced by 75% (two tonnes). Six 240 litre landfill bins were generated during the entire event.



Bin stations at the QMF.
Image: Caring for our Bays

Top Tips:



1. Shared vision

Build a team of staff, volunteers and contractors with a shared vision on waste minimisation and transparent operations.

2. Stay informed

Make sure you are well informed in every step of the operation, from the type of waste that will be generated to how it will be collected and processed. Ensure knowledgeable people are on the ground to relay information to volunteers, patrons and stallholders, and check the sorting and on-site processing is maintained to a high standard.

3. Staffed bin stations at select locations

The QMF replaced 100 on-site bins with 10 strategically placed bin stations, each collecting four waste streams. The stations used emotive and informative signage, linking waste disposal behaviour to the health of loved local animals. Each station was staffed by two “Bin Fairies” to help patrons use the bin stations correctly, build community knowledge and avoid contaminated waste streams.

WRECK2REEF OPEN WATER SWIM



EVENT SNAPSHOT

The Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim is a competitive ocean swim event that showcases the Northern Bellarine. Organised by the Indented Head Yacht Club on the second weekend of February, the event raises funds to support healthy activities for local youth.

Attendees: Approx. 1,000
(300 competitors & 700 spectators)

Duration: Four hours

The calm waters of Half Moon Bay, Indented Head welcome more than 1,000 visitors to the Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim every year. The event is organised by a team of five volunteers and offers one or two food and drink stallholders, as well as a sausage sizzle run by the Indented Head Yacht Club volunteers.

Through a natural partnership with Caring for our Bays, Wreck2Reef organisers continue to build upon and improve the event. As the Yacht Club is closely connected to Port Phillip Bay, organisers wanted to ensure the events held in 2019 and 2020 continued to protect the water and took advantage of the opportunity to educate the local community on waste minimisation.

THE APPROACH

- Reusable cutlery and crockery
- Reusable cups from Caring for our Bays replaced single use plastic cups for swimmers in 2019
- An event-branded water bottle was gifted to swimmers in 2020, which could be refilled using a trailer filter system supplied by Barwon Water
- Reusable timing bracelets replaced single use bracelets
- Landfill and recycling streams were offered to patrons.

THE RESULT

- Overall reduction in waste generated at the event, including 2,000 single use plastic cups diverted from landfill
- 90% of participants used the reusable cutlery and crockery system
- Swim caps were reused or recycled rather than taken to landfill. 50% of caps were returned to event organisers, which were then washed and dried for future events.

“When you’re so close to the coast, a little thing can have a great impact.”



Reusable cups replaced single use plastic cups for swimmers at Wreck2Reef.

Top Tips:

1. Planning is crucial

Planning waste minimisation initiatives ahead of the event should be a primary consideration for all event organisers.

2. Share resources

Get in touch with your local council and other event organisers to see if there is an opportunity to share resources or infrastructure such as gantries, pedestrian fencing, and food and drink stations.

3. Encourage best practice

When organising your event, encourage stallholders to look for ways to introduce more environmentally friendly initiatives.



TRESTLE 10 FUN RUN

Trestle 10 Fun Run



EVENT SNAPSHOT

The Trestle 10 Fun Run is a family-friendly running and walking event which is held along the picturesque Timboon-Camperdown rail trail every February. Organised by a team of six volunteers, the fun run was initially set up to encourage community activity and use of the rail trail.

Attendees: Approx. 280

Duration: Four hours

Since 2018, the Trestle 10 Fun Run has brought together the community of Timboon and its local businesses, with a central focus on the Timboon-Camperdown rail trail. Each year community organisations and local businesses offer food and drink stations to patrons, including egg and bacon roll stands and coffee vans.

As the Trestle 10 Fun Run continues to grow in size and popularity, reducing the amount of waste produced at the event is critical to ensure future fun runs align with the local community's values of organising environmentally sustainable events.

The biggest waste items identified from previous events included cups from drink stations, race bibs, coffee cups and serviettes. In 2020, the committee developed a range of strategies to collect and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, and used a staged approach to limit the burden on the volunteer committee.

THE APPROACH

- Five dual bin stations with landfill and commingle recycling collection options, labelled using Sustainability Victoria signage about what products could be placed in each bin
- One 30 litre organics bin located next to the fruit stand to collect food scraps
- Drink stations provided by Wannon Water to reduce the need for single use plastic water bottles
- Reusable cups for drink stations along the trail.

THE RESULT

- One 240 litre landfill bin
- One 240 litre commingle bin of recyclables
- 30 litres of organic waste. The committee posted the amount of organic waste that was composted following the event on social media, which received positive feedback.

WHAT NEXT?

- The committee will undertake a thorough waste audit to determine the exact content of each waste stream
- A viable solution will be developed to eliminate disposable coffee cups from future events, as they are a likely major contributor to the total amount of waste produced
- A clear policy on minimising waste will be developed for sponsors and stallholders. This will be developed with both parties in advance to make sure that any organic waste is collected separately, and no unnecessary waste is created.

“The committee will devise the most appropriate waste strategies to avoid, reuse and recycle at future events.”

Top Tips:



1. Share your goals

Speak to stallholders (particularly food and drink stalls) as well as sponsors in advance about the waste minimisation targets you want to achieve.

This became evident after a sponsor arrived with bottled water and the committee had to discourage them from handing it out to patrons.

2. Understand what goes in each bin

Make sure your team is across what items can be included in each waste stream to help with event organisation and educating patrons during the event. For example, most eggshells were placed in the landfill bin rather than the organics bin in 2020.

3. Develop specific strategies

Once you understand the type of waste to be collected in each bin, develop specific strategies to target the waste streams you have identified.

A staged approach was used to reduce waste at the Trestle 10 Fun Run.

ANGLESEA TWILIGHT FARMERS' MARKET



EVENT SNAPSHOT

The Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market supports local growers, as well as producers using local ingredients, and provides an avenue for the community to access seasonal and sustainably produced food. The event is organised by a team of 7-8 volunteers.

Attendees: 600-1,000

Duration: Four hours
(once per week from late December to February)

A highlight of the summer season, the Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market was successfully used as a platform to educate patrons about minimising waste and establishing a circular economy in 2019/20. Working with the Anglesea Community House and Surf Coast Shire, organisers developed two pilot markets with a focus on minimising waste.

Event organisers were keen to work with stallholders and patrons to move to zero waste. The first pilot market included two food stalls among 23 stallholders, while the second pilot market included three food stalls among 28 stallholders.

THE APPROACH

- In line with Surf Coast Shire's plastic free policy, organisers borrowed one central bin station from the Queenscliff Music Festival. An organics waste stream and an aluminium can waste stream was available to patrons, as well as a food organics and garden organics bin from Surf Coast Shire
- Volunteers monitored patrons' use of the bin stations to help educate them on proper waste disposal and avoid collecting waste from outside the market
- A rinse station was located next to the bin station for reusable crockery. Food stallholders ordered the crockery needed for their stalls and patrons would rinse their own crockery before it was stacked, sent back to the town hall for commercial washing and returned to the market. This process was overseen by a volunteer
- Surveys were given to patrons to collect valuable data on the success of the zero waste initiatives
- Boomerang bags and reusable containers were provided to patrons upon entry
- Signage promoted the Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market as a waste wise event.

THE RESULT

- Approximately 3.5kg of organic waste and less than 500g of aluminium cans were collected at the first pilot market with 800-1,000 patrons, which exceeded expectations
- Approximately 2.5kg of organic waste and less than 500g of aluminium cans were collected at the second pilot market with 600-800 patrons
- Many stallholders sold reusable cups to patrons. Some stallholders also brought their material in bulk to distribute to patrons' reusable containers
- Event organisers received overwhelmingly positive feedback on the waste initiatives and targeted educational experience at the market.

WHAT NEXT?

- The 2021 event will look to incorporate reusable cups and an on-site rinse station/washable system.

Event organisers worked with stallholders and patrons to move to zero waste at the Anglesea Twilight Farmers' Market.
Image: Timothy Marriage

Top Tips:

1. Feedback is king

Incorporate patron surveys to get on-the-ground feedback about the success of your zero waste strategies.

2. In this together

Event organisers and stallholders can help patrons minimise waste by offering reusable bags or containers for recurring markets.

3. Get support

Work with your local council and other event organisers to borrow resources for your event, such as bin stations or rinse stations.



“From the start, we were keen to work with stallholders and patrons to move to zero waste.”

FRESHWATER CREEK STEINER SCHOOL SPRING FAIR

Freshwater Creek
Steiner School
Spring Fair



EVENT SNAPSHOT

The Freshwater Creek Steiner School Spring Fair welcomes the local community to the rural school grounds and offers family-friendly entertainment, competitions and food and drink stalls.

Attendees: 1,000

Duration: One day

In a first for the Freshwater Creek Steiner School Spring Fair, the school instigated a no plastic and reusable theme for its 2019 event. Organisers worked alongside Geelong Sustainability, Bellarine Catchment Network (BCN) and Queenscliff Music Festival to create an almost zero waste event.

THE APPROACH

- Water refill station
- Two Queenscliff Music Festival Caring for our Bays bin stations were monitored by Waste Reduction Champions
- A 'wash against waste' effort was introduced with reusables including 400 Bellarine Catchment Network cups
- Three soft plastic milk bladders from a local dairy replaced 10 three litre hard plastic milk bottles at the school's Chai Café stall, as milk bottles were one of the largest waste contributors in the past
- A local family provided tigernut and hempseed milk in reusable glass bottles to replace 20 litres of soymilk and its packaging previously sent to landfill.

THE RESULT

- Most waste was diverted from landfill, with only 60 litres of general waste collected across the event
- 30 grams of soft plastic from the milk bladders was recycled
- The Common Ground Project (a neighbouring café and farming social enterprise) looked after the 480 litres of compost
- Bread tags and plastic lids were collected for charity (Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs and Lids 4 Kids)
- Batteries were collected for recycling.



“It was a great example of how a small group at a local event can manage waste and reduce their impact at an event.”

Top Tips:



1. It pays to advertise

Incorporate information on your waste free initiatives when promoting your event. A waste free flyer was included on the flip side of the main poster promoting the school fair, which sent a clear message to patrons about what they could bring to the fair and what was supplied.

2. Follow-up with results

Use the media to share your success with patrons and the broader community. The results from the school fair’s waste reduction initiatives were showcased on the radio in the week following the event.

3. Think outside the square

Don’t underestimate how stallholders can get on board with your zero waste initiatives. A coffee van at the school fair offered a mug library and others offered reusable plates. A Second Hand Stall was also introduced to sell quality second hand toys, books, clothes and handmade fabric bags.

Local families and businesses contributed to eliminating waste at the Freshwater Creek Steiner School Spring Fair.

Tool kit

OVERVIEW

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1. Waste at events in the time of COVID-19
2. Council zero waste event policy

BEFORE THE EVENT

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3. Zero waste event action plan
4. Bin signage
5. Communication and education plan
6. Reusable cups and crockery considerations

DURING THE EVENT

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7. Stallholder assessment check
8. Site assessment and litter and bin monitoring
9. Patron questionnaire

AFTER THE EVENT

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10. Waste audit and data sheet
11. Event evaluation and report outline

