



## City of Oakland Planning a Zero Waste Meeting

Making your next City meeting a Zero Waste event is easier than you think. Whether you are a meeting host or planner, these tips and resources can help you practice the 4 Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot to *reduce our carbon footprint*.

The best way to meet your budget and waste reduction goals is to make a plan. You will need to consider the following for your Zero Waste Meeting:

- Will refreshments be served?
- Will there be an agenda or other printed materials?
- Will there be any other materials to discard at the end of the meeting?

Identify items you will provide at the meeting that may be discarded at the end. Can these items be recycled or reused? If not, are there other options that will reduce the amount of waste you generate?

### Process:

1. Check your meeting area ahead of time to make sure you have a Recycling Station with clearly labeled containers for paper, bottles & cans, and garbage. Contact Facility Services (238-3219) to correct any problems you find.
2. If you plan to serve food or drinks, find out if food scraps recycling is available at your facility. Facilities Services can provide “on call” food scraps recycling service that can be set up for meetings in the Civic Center Complex. Food scrap recycling service is available for Hearing Rooms 3 & 4. Be sure to indicate that you intend to serve food on the Hearing Room reservation form so Facilities Services can set up the proper collection system.
3. Ask the caterer to provide reusable plates, silverware and cups as appropriate. There may be an additional charge for this service.
4. Provide condiments (sugar, creamer, mayonnaise, etc.) in serving containers rather than individual packets.
5. Require the use of compostable food service ware when reusable items are not an option. ***Paper plates, cups, and napkins*** are the most cost effective compostable products. Compostable “silverware” is available.
6. Serving food on polystyrene foam dishes or containers is prohibited in City facilities.
7. Ask attendees to bring their own reusable cups if you are serving beverages. Serve finger foods on napkins instead of paper plates when practical.
8. Project the meeting agenda on a screen, or write it on a board or flip chart where everyone can see it, instead of making paper copies.
9. On the meeting day, make the first item on the agenda a zero waste announcement similar to the following:  

***“Welcome everyone. This is a zero waste meeting; please deposit your paper, and bottles and cans into the recycling containers. The food scrap container is for your uneaten food, paper plates, napkins, and cups, and compostable knives and forks. Thank you for assisting us in making this meeting a zero waste meeting.”***
10. If you are expecting a large group, ask a colleague to monitor the recycling stations directing attendees to the proper container.

11. The last item on the agenda should be a reminder that repeats the zero waste message.

*“Thank you for attending and please remember to place your paper, etc...”*

12. Cleanup – collect all the remaining paper items such as agendas or handouts and place in the paper recycling container.

Congratulations. With a very small amount of effort, you too can successfully have a meeting with no trash going to the landfill!

### **Technical Assistance**

Recycling Hotline  
(510) 238-SAVE (7283) or  
[recycling@oaklandnet.com](mailto:recycling@oaklandnet.com)

### **Compostable Food Service Supplies**

**Remember that paper plates, cups and napkins are widely available, inexpensive, and easily compostable.**

Whole Foods Market – to pick up small quantities of compostable plastic utensils  
230 Bay Place, Oakland, CA 94612

For larger meetings or events [visit our website](#) for a list of local distributors of compostable food service ware.

Visit StopWaste.Org for a comprehensive list of compostable food service ware distributors.  
[http://www.stopwaste.org/docs/bioplastics\\_products-distrib.pdf](http://www.stopwaste.org/docs/bioplastics_products-distrib.pdf)