

INTRODUCTION

As a result of the great events that happen in NSW every year, thousands of tonnes of waste are generated, often ending up in landfill or as litter polluting our streets and waterways. The waste is a loss of resources, as at least 60% of the material could be recycled. We can reverse this mountain of waste and reduce the environmental impact of events by working towards making every event in NSW a Waste Wise Event!

This Waste Wise Events Guide is an easy to use tool for event coordinators, venue managers, land owners and council officers involved in either coordinating or issuing approvals for big and small events. The guide will help establish waste avoidance strategies and practices that can be easily implemented by council officers and event organisers to address waste generation at events across NSW. By making your event Waste Wise, it will reduce the environmental impacts it causes, increase the levels of recycling and avoid creating waste from the beginning. While events come in all shapes and sizes – from the Big Day Out to neighbourhood street fairs – the principles of event waste reduction, management and recycling are the same. This guide contains proven waste avoidance and resource recovery strategies that have been thoroughly tested over time. It contains checklists, templates and sample documents that will make the jobs of Council Officers and Event Organisers easier.

WHAT IS A WASTE WISE EVENT?

A Waste Wise Event is designed so that garbage is minimised and recycling is maximised. A Waste Wise Event involves planning and implementing waste avoidance strategies that encourage stakeholders and vendors to minimise the use of non-reusable and non-recyclable catering products and packaging. It has a bin system that encourages and makes it easy for attendees and stallholders to recycle and dispose of waste materials responsibly.

A Waste Wise Event is achieved by

- Adopting policies that encourage sustainable purchasing practices
- Working with vendors and suppliers to use recyclable and biodegradable packaging
- Having good signage and placement of bin stations to make recycling easier for attendees
- Implementing bin systems designed and managed to maximise the recovery of recyclable materials from vendors and attendees, as well as reducing littering
- Using effective clean-up practices
- Evaluating the success of your Waste Wise Event to identify areas for improvement

The principles and practices contained in this guide have been around since before the Sydney Olympics in 2000 and have been updated to reflect a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities of making an event waste wise. Waste Wise principles are supported by 87% of the general public, who now expect recycling at events.

WHY BE WASTE WISE?

It is good economic and environmental sense to make all events waste wise. A Waste Wise Event benefits councils, event organisers, the public and the environment by reinforcing sustainable behaviour.

Councils that have policies on waste reduction and resource recovery at public events are more likely to meet their community's environmental expectations. Your Waste Wise Event can impact on the behaviour of stallholders and attendees in a positive way by reinforcing at home recycling practices. Attachment 2 is a template policy that councils can adopt or tailor to suit their own needs.

Event organisers save money by reducing post-event clean-up costs and the amount of waste sent to landfill, and generate goodwill among the public. Providing recycling and reducing litter enhances the reputation of the event, making it more attractive to tourists and other visitors.

The public benefits by being able to attend a clean and tidy event. 87% of attendees are supportive of Waste Wise practices and want well-organised waste and recycling services and the event that they are attending to be clean and free of litter.

The environment benefits from a more sustainable use of resources, the avoidance of waste and litter, a decrease in material going to landfill, and the use of materials that are less environmentally damaging. Decreasing the quantity required of single use catering products and packaging materials, decreases the environmental impact of the event by reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, water and energy used in the production process.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This easy to use guide has been developed for councils, other landowners and managers, and event organisers. It sets out the planning of a Waste Wise Event in three stages:

BEFORE THE EVENT	
DURING THE EVENT	
AFTER THE EVENT	

Within these stages there are useful steps to follow, tips and suggestions for who you may need to involve or what assistance you may need. Each stage has a checklist and useful tools that can be used, such as sample planning documents, surveys and media releases. They are available in an easy to adapt format for your event from:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wastewiseevents/

LAWS THAT RELATE TO BEING WASTE WISE

There is a range of State and Federal legislation that has an impact on waste management at events in public places.

NEW SOUTH WALES ACTS

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001

Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment Act 2005

Local Government Act 1993

Disability Services Act 1993

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000**

Explosives Act 2003 and the supporting Explosives Regulation 2005

OHS Amendment (Dangerous Goods) Act 2003

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FEDERAL ACTS

Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

STANDARDS

NSW Food Authority: Food Handling Guidelines for Temporary Events: regulations covering markets and specific temporary food events across NSW, including laws on donating leftover food.

www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

* All event managers, regardless of whether they are running a specific Waste Wise Event, should be aware of their responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and associated regulations, to ensure that their event is safe. Key areas to consider include: risk management and control measures; traffic management; use of mobile plant (such as fork lift trucks); dangerous goods and explosives (fireworks); crowd management, and an emergency management plan. If team members are required to pick up litter or handle waste it is important to provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, litter collection implements, etc. At no time should team members be required to handle needles.

For further information and copies of state legislation:

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

USEFUL LINKS

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wastewiseevents/

Department of Environment and Conservation NSW

www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au

Zero Waste South Australia

www.sustainability.vic.gov.au

Sustainability Victoria: Waste Wise Program