



# Champlain College Green Team Member Guide



## Background

At Champlain College we are working toward becoming a “Zero Waste” institution. One step toward this goal is hosting Zero Waste Events. A Zero Waste Event is any one-time program, occasion, or event that diverts the waste generated by at least 90%. This is accomplished by reducing, composting and recycling most of the waste from the event. Together, Sustain Champlain, Conference and Event Center, and Dining Services work with event planners to make events zero waste.

## Helpful terms:

- Waste Reduction = strategies to reduce total waste generation (garbage, recycling, and compost)
- Waste Diversion = diverting materials from the landfill by recycling, composting, reusing, donating, or re-selling.

## Zero Waste Event Planning

Event planners have devoted thought and time to minimizing the waste that will be produced at the event. A few ways that the waste will be minimized may include:

- 1) Products with minimal packaging, utilizing reusable and durable items, and utilizing compostable and recyclable only products will be utilized
- 2) Dining Services/Catering staff will serve appropriate food portions to avoid food waste.
- 3) Often, electronic tools for promotion, information, and registration will be utilized instead of print materials.
- 4) Further ways that this Zero Waste Event may attempt to reduce its environmental impact include: providing food that contains locally-sourced ingredients, hosting the event in a space with natural light, and encouraging attendees to use bicycles or public transit to get to the event.

## What goes where?

If compost or recycling is contaminated with non-compostable or non-recyclable materials, it will not be accepted by our waste hauler. Therefore it is very important to keep the items in their proper bins.

### Compost

- Food and beverages
- Napkins/paper towels
- Compostable plates
- Compostable cups (Please look for the #7 on any “plastic” cups – as this indicates it is a bio-plastic and can be composted.)

### Recycling

- Plastic bottles and cups\* (Any plastic items labeled with #1-6 on the bottom can be recycled).
  - Glass bottles\*
  - Aluminum cans\* or foil
  - Office paper and newspaper
- \*please dump out any liquids into the compost bins

### Trash

- Candy, condiment and plastic wrappers
- Plastic utensils
- Anything else that is not compostable or recyclable

*See more on next page*

## Why zero waste?

Zero Waste Events minimize the waste generated by at least 90%. This greatly reduces the amount of landfill waste created at Champlain College. Recycling and composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions, saves natural resources, and reduces pollution, which ultimately support planetary and human health. Composting creates a useful product that can be used again. Furthermore, Zero Waste Events encourage attendees to think about the consequences of their actions. Hopefully, Zero Waste Events will contribute to a growing culture of sustainability at Champlain College. When educating event participants we encourage you to share some of these facts!

## What is my role as a Zero Waste Event Member?

- 1) Without people like you, Zero Waste Events would not be successful.
- 2) As a Green Team Member, you are responsible for educating event participants in placing their items in the correct bin, known as “Sort it Out” on campus. As they approach you with their disposables, you will be responsible for helping them dispose of the items correctly.
- 3) If participants place items in the wrong bin, remove contaminated items from bin and place them in proper bin. Contamination can potentially disqualify the items from being disposed of properly. You will be given gloves.
- 4) Engage participants. Talk to them about the zero waste concept. Educate them about what the Zero Waste Event is accomplishing.
- 5) When there is down time, take a look around and dispose of any waste left around.
- 6) Take note of what items are being placed in the wrong bin, and ask announcers to clarify which waste streams are appropriate for those specific items in the next announcement.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **I can compost this plastic cup?** Yes. If there is a #7 on any “plastic” cups – as this indicates it is a bio-plastic, typically made from corn or potato starch, and can be composted.
2. **I can compost meat and bones?** Yes. We send our food waste and other compostables to a large scale compost facility (Green Mountain Compost in Williston, VT). The system there reaches very high temperatures that can break meat and other items down safely.
3. **What about the “compostable utensils”?** We tried using these, but Green Mountain Compost found they were not breaking down enough and do not allow them in their mix.
4. **Where does the recycling go?** Chittenden Solid Waste District has a Materials Recovery Facility in Williston where all recyclables are sorted and shipped to those purchasing the material to use in new products.
5. **Where does the trash go?** To a landfill in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont (Coventry, VT)

Thank you for being a Green Team member. Without your help, accomplishing zero waste would not be possible! If you have any questions, do not hesitate to speak with the Green Team Coordinator or Sustainability Director.



[www.champlain.edu/sustain](http://www.champlain.edu/sustain) <http://bit.ly/CCSortItOut>