



Rhode Island DEM Green Certification Program

Green Event Self-Certification Workbook

October 2023

Introduction:

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management "Green Events" Program takes action against plastic pollution and promotes sustainable practices at festivals, conferences, meetings and other events. This checklist allows for both large or small events held across the state to curb pollution, increase recycling, educate event patrons, and reduce single use plastic. RIDEM **strongly encourages** all events to become green certified.

Benefits that you will receive by certifying your event “green” include:

- 1) Technical assistance from the RIDEM Office of Customer and Technical Assistance for the implementation of the green event
- 2) A certificate to display at your event
- 3) RIDEM Green Certification logo to Identify your event as a RIDEM certified green event.
- 4) A listing on RIDEM Green Events webpage

Directions:

The following checklist presents a menu of several best management practices and pollution prevention action items that have been developed by RIDEM to help event planners commit to sustainability and become green certified. Please note this checklist provides examples of some of the statewide resources available. The RIDEM does not recommend any one business or organization over another. Use this form to conduct a self-assessment of your event and to guide you through the process of becoming certified as a "Green Event". Once you check off **12 out of the 27** “Best Management Practices” provided, you are automatically certified for a green event. This is a fillable form. Please download and complete the checklist and electronically submit when complete. If you run into any issues during submittal or need assistance in filling this out, please contact:

RIDEM Green Events
Office of Customer and Technical Assistance
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street Providence, RI 02908
401-222-4700
DEM.GreenEvents@dem.ri.gov

Rhode Island DEM Green Events Checklist

Event Information:

Event Name

Event Location

Event Date

Event Address

Event Planner/Coordinator

Event Coordinator Phone Number

Coordinator Email

Submitted by

Event Website Link

Number of People Expected

Steps to a "Green Event"

Check the box for each pledge or action you commit to incorporating into your event.

Section 1: Plastics Reduction, Recycling, and Sustainability

1. Designate a "Green Team" for Your Event.

Having a Green Team that focuses on Plastic Use Elimination, Reduction, Recycling, and Sustainability should be the first thing you consider when planning your event. This will aid in effective planning to reduce or eliminate the use of single use plastics and follow sustainable practices.

What we are doing:

Green Team Members:

2. Develop and Implement a Plan to Reduce Single-Use Plastic Water Bottles.

On average, Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour and many of them end up in our local waterways and special events can be a major contributor to the over reliance on plastic water bottles. As an example, to implement this BMP you may require staff at the event to only use re-useable water bottles. Make sure to market this to staff and on event website and or materials.

What we are doing:

3. Provide Water Refilling Stations in Public Areas.

Water refilling stations are a great way to encourage your event patrons and staff to drink more water in a sustainable fashion. Make sure to market this on event website or event materials so that people are expected to bring personal water bottles. ([Meetpat](#)), ([Uspurewater](#)), ([FloWater](#)), ([WaterMonster](#))

What we are doing:

4. Eliminate Single-Use Plastic Bags and Plastic Straws.

Take steps to eliminate single use plastic bags, plastic straws, and stirrers with food vendors, exhibitors, and food services. Many communities in Rhode Island are now banning single use plastic bags and straws from stores and shops. This agreement with vendors can be included in contracts/agreements.

What we are doing:

5. Provide Ample Opportunity for Comprehensive Recycling and Retain a Recycling Vendor.

Well labeled bins co-located with trash receptacles in convenient areas throughout the event space for event attendees and in vendor staging areas. Bins should be appropriately sized to handle the volume of recycling. Trash, compost, and recycling bins should ALWAYS be located adjacent to one another at all locations. Comprehensive recycling should include glass, plastics, paper, and cardboard. See [Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation \(RIRRC\)](#) for more information. Click to print your free labels [here!](#)

What we are doing:

Provide name and contact information for waste hauler and recycling vendor:

6. Track Weights of Trash and Recycling.

Calculate the recycling rate for your event by retaining records for metrics calculations. Report in pounds/tons of recycled material. Submit to DEM

(DEM.GreenEvents@dem.ri.gov) no later than 2 weeks after event is complete.

What we are doing:

7. Recycle Additional Items Such as Plastic Bags, Electronics, Clothing or Other.

Identify what types of special waste items you anticipate at your event. Please describe how you recycle them.

What we are doing:

8. No Balloon, Glitter, and Paper Lantern Releases.

Balloon, glitter, and paper lantern releases cause pollution in rivers, streams and oceans. They can cause irreversible damage to marine and aquatic life via ingestion and entanglement.

What we are doing:

9. Post Responsible Environmental Signage.

Signs are vital to all aspects of your program, and you have a great opportunity to make those signs describe your efforts to be a green event. Signs should also be present at all recycling bins, exits, entrances, and restrooms. You may want to display your RIDEM Green Event Certification at sign locations.

What we are doing:

10. Event is 100% Paper-Free or Uses Very Little Paper.

Promote Event and Advertise electronically by use of social media, email blasts, etc. Use QR codes/mobile app for schedules and other event materials. Name badges/lanyards to be collected and reused. If paper is a must, exhibitors informed on sustainability policy and encouraged to use highest possible % post-consumer recycled content.

What we are doing:

11. Provide Responsible Dinnerware.

Discontinue use of polystyrene cups, plastic utensils, non-bleached napkins, and plastic containers at food vendors and food services. Responsible dinnerware includes items that can be either recycled or composted. You should coordinate dinnerware choices with food vendors. Compostable dinnerware should be BPI certified. See link <https://products.bpiworld.org/>

What we are doing:

Section 2: Food Sources and Food Waste

12. Choose Locally Based Food Ingredients.

Choose vendors located in Rhode Island or Southern New England – particularly those who source ingredient locally. The State of Rhode Island “Supply RI” program <https://www.supplyrhodeisland.com/> is a good place to start to search for vendors.

What we are doing:

13. Serve Food that Was Grown, Landed, or Made Within Rhode Island (and Greater New England Region).

Rhode Island subscribes to the Food Solution New England Regional Food Vision that by 2060, 50% of the food consumed in the region will have been grown, harvested, caught, or made in the region. Support your local farmer, fisher, or maker and source locally.

Resources for this include: working with the distributor for your caterer, and possibly one of the listed organizations/collaborative: ([Farm Fresh RI’s Market Mobile Program](#)) ([Hope & Main](#))([Seafood Marketing Collaborative](#))

What we are doing:

14. Label All Food Clearly with Dietary Information and Source.

Labeling local food options will help local businesses gain more attention and will allow those in attendance at the event to make well-informed sustainable choices.

What we are doing:

15. Food Vendors Source Locally Landed Seafood.

What we are doing / list vendors:

16. Consider Offering Healthy Options for Your Attendees.

The States Healthy Meetings checklist form the Rhode Island Department of Health is a good guide for making healthy choices in catering. For more information: <https://health.ri.gov/work/for/eventfoodvendors/>

What we are doing:

17. Recycle Grease at Vendors.

Grease can be recycled at food vendors into biodiesel. A specific vendor would need to be retained to collect grease and oil. Statewide Options:

(<https://www.mahoneyeyes.com/newport-biodiesel/>) (<https://bakercommodities.com/>) **Planned vendor:**

18. Donation of Excess Food.

Events can generate large quantities of wasted food. Safely donate through the “Rhode to End Hunger” http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/detail.php?pgm_id=1118. Or the Means Database at <https://meansdatabase.org/ri/>

What we are doing:

19. Compost Food Waste Generated at Events that is Not Able to be Donated.

Work with a compost hauler and have separate bins available that are appropriately labeled for exactly what can be composted in them. You may want to enlist members of your green team to assure food waste is disposed of in the compost bins. Food waste resources can be found at the following links:

([The Compost Plant](#)) ([Black Earth Compost](#)) ([Center for EcoTechnology](#)) ([Groundwork RI](#))
([Epic Renewal](#)) ([Bootstrap Compost](#))

What we are doing:

Please provide name of food waste hauler:

Please provide name of compost hauler:

20. Track How Much Food Waste is Collected to Calculate Metrics.

Data should be submitted to DEM (DEM.GreenEvents@dem.ri.gov) no later than two weeks after event.

What we are doing:

Section 3: Energy Use and Water Use

21. Event is Held in Sustainable Venue or Outside.

Venues can be decided on or chosen for their energy efficiency and sustainable amenities (LED-certified building, space with natural lighting, outside, etc.)

What we are doing:

22. Provide Free Shuttles and Free Parking at Shuttle Pick Up for Event Patrons Who Choose to Drive.

What we are doing:

23. Encourage Carpooling, Public Transportation, Biking, and Walking to the Event Through Event Website.

Market this on event website/material so attendees know their options.

What we are doing:

24. Provide Electric Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles.

What we are doing:

25. Use of “Renewable Energy” Sources (i.e. solar, biodiesel, wind, etc.).

What we are doing:

26. Greenhouse Gas Impacts of Event Calculated & Off -Set.

Please describe how metrics were calculated and submit to DEM no later than 2 weeks after event (DEM.GreenEvents@dem.ri.gov).

What we are doing:

27. Low Flow Toilets, Faucets, and Smart Sensor Lighting in Restrooms.

What we are doing:

Other Initiatives

Please use this space to describe any other initiatives planned that are not listed in this checklist.