

Zero Waste Event Volunteer Training & Engagement

Your effort supports U-M's
waste reduction goal:

Reduce landfill waste
by 40% by 2025



Volunteers are critical to ensuring a successful zero waste event.

Finding and Training Volunteers

1. Recruit enough volunteers to have one person staff each waste station, which includes a composting, recycling, and landfill bin. For maximum impact, ensure that your volunteers are only responsible for monitoring the waste stations and not other tasks (ushering, food service, etc.).
2. Finding volunteers might begin with going to members of your student group or office "green team" or connecting with Planet Blue Ambassadors.
3. For large events that require many volunteers, consider designating a volunteer coordinator to be responsible for recruiting, training, and organizing all of the help.
4. If your event will be longer than 2-3 hours, consider staffing volunteers in shifts.
5. Pre-event training (online or in person) is strongly recommended to convey a consistent message and to answer any questions. Volunteers need to know the proper placement of each type of item expected at the event.
 - A short online training is available on the Zero Waste Program website.
 - The Office of Campus Sustainability can provide event-specific cheat sheets as well as "Zero Waste Volunteer" pins for your volunteer crew.



Engaging Volunteers

Once you have found volunteers willing to dedicate their time to your zero waste goal, it is equally important to keep them engaged.

- Communicate with them how meaningful their role is. Guiding people at collection stations is critical to making the zero waste event a success—and it's a great way to introduce new people to composting. Further, share that this is a part of a larger movement toward reaching U-M's sustainability goal for waste reduction.
- Following the event, share with the volunteers what they have helped to achieve. Sharing photos and videos can help volunteers, as well as event attendees, see the result of a commitment toward making the event zero waste.

TAKEAWAY

Unlike recyclables, compostables are not sorted. Any non-compostable items mixed in with compostables will contaminate the end product.

The compost facility will not take compost from U-M if there are ANY non-compostables mixed in. Find and train event volunteers to help out!

THE #1 PRIORITY FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS:

Ensuring ONLY compostable materials end up in the compost collection bins.

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MORE INFO: ocs.umich.edu

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