

Guide for **Eco-Responsible Events**



City of Dorval



INTRODUCTION

As part of its commitment to reducing the ecological footprint of its activities, the City of Dorval is pleased to provide this guide to event organizers. Whether you are employees, volunteers, suppliers, or partners, whether your event is big or small, whether it is a festive, cultural, community, or sporting event, this guide proposes concrete actions to reduce the environmental footprint of your activities.

WHY ECO-RESPONSIBLE EVENTS?



To reduce the impact on the environment by limiting overconsumption of resources, waste generation, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions



To save money by reducing at source



To have a positive impact on the community and nature

ECO-RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR EVENTS IN 7 STEPS

1. Plan the event while respecting the neighbourhood and the natural environment
2. Communicate and make a social commitment
3. Source and manage materials responsibly
4. Promote sustainable modes of transport
5. Select sustainable food and containers
6. Manage waste responsibly
7. Continuously improve



BASIC PRINCIPLE OF ECO-RESPONSIBILITY

In the hierarchy of the 3R's (reduce, reuse, recycle), the first R is paramount. Reducing at source is the best way to save money and reduce our ecological footprint. Simplicity is trendy!

In the following pages, you'll be able to check off the actions taken during the organization of the activity and during the event itself. Certain suggested actions may not apply to your type of event, that is why there are no good or bad grades. The challenge is to increase the number of actions undertaken at each event. Eco-responsibility is a matter of continuous improvement!

1. Plan the event while respecting the neighbourhood and the natural environment

- ☐ At all stages of the planning, organizers must practice eco-responsibility, in particular by limiting their travel and reducing their purchases and printing.
- ☐ Choose activities with less impact on the environment. For example, identify less harmful alternatives to fireworks, propose a rally on foot or by bicycle rather than by car, non-motorized water activities, activities that require less equipment and are accessible to a larger number of people, etc.
- ☐ Choose a venue that already has as much equipment as possible on site, to limit the transport of materials (waste recovery equipment, infrastructure and furniture, audiovisual equipment, sanitary facilities, amenities for children, handling equipment, electrical connections, access to drinking water, etc.).
- ☐ Choose a location accessible by active transport and public transportation, and ensure access for people with reduced mobility.
- ☐ Explore the possibility of offering a virtual version of the event to increase its accessibility and limit travel.
- ☐ Plan the means to return the site to the state it was in prior to the event and leave as few traces of your visit as possible (no removal of natural elements in the environment, define the parameters of the space to be occupied, install signage to identify buffer strips, etc.).
- ☐ Limit and strategically direct noise and light to reduce nuisance to local communities and ecosystems.
- ☐ Inform the neighbourhood in advance of the event to warn them of possible disturbances.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 1: _____

2. Communicate and make a social commitment

- ☐ Make your eco-responsibility commitments known to all stakeholders (employees, volunteers, suppliers, partners, exhibitors, etc.) before and during the event. Raise stakeholders' awareness of the environmental footprint of their behaviour and ensure their engagement.
- ☐ Make your communications inclusive for people of diverse backgrounds.
- ☐ Promote local culture and talent by integrating them into programming or showcasing them (for example: by exhibiting their work).
- ☐ Partner with an environmental or local cause or organization and encourage participants to contribute, for example by setting up a donation box. Make donations of money, materials, or food.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 2: _____



3. Source and manage materials responsibly

- ☐ Purchase only what is essential. Rent, borrow, reuse, repurpose, or repair whatever you can. For example, replace the use of balloons with reusable decorations, such as banners made with fabric purchased at thrift stores.
- ☐ When purchase of goods is necessary, consider buying second-hand, selecting local suppliers, and favouring cooperatives, non-profit organizations, and businesses that have a social mission.
- ☐ When purchase of goods is necessary, avoid products containing hazardous or toxic materials, consider buying recycled materials, use products that compost or recycle easily, avoid overpackaged products, and purchase in bulk or in large format to reduce packaging.
- ☐ Reduce or even eliminate the distribution and sale of gifts or [promotional items](#) to participants. Rather than objects, offer experiences (show, restaurant, museum, course or workshop, subscription, etc.) or flower plants or shrubs. Avoid disposable materials and the distribution of bags, even reusable ones.
- ☐ Reuse badges, rosettes, decorations, accessories, displays, and tablecloths.
- ☐ Provide a storage area to store reusable equipment for events.
- ☐ Donate decor elements or other equipment that will no longer be used to local schools, day camps, or theatre groups.
- ☐ Favour digital communication methods rather than physical ones for invitations, displays, surveys, etc. Create [reusable posters](#) without a date or design specific to a single edition, use erasable surfaces.
- ☐ Reduce document size and print double-sided. Choose post-consumer recycled paper, certified for sustainable forestry (e.g. FSC) and unbleached.
- ☐ Use biodegradable cleaning products that are not harmful to human health and nature.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 3: _____

4. Select sustainable food and containers

Food

- ☐ Favour eco-responsible suppliers (zero waste or with a focus on social reintegration).
- ☐ Promote vegetarian dishes that include plant proteins (legumes, soy, nuts, etc.) in order to reduce the proportion of meat in menus, given the significant ecological footprint of animal production.
- ☐ Opt as much as possible for local, organic, and fair trade products (including wine) having little or no processing.
- ☐ Clearly identify the contents of foods to inform people with allergies or special diets.
- ☐ Evaluate the correct quantities of food to avoid food surpluses.
- ☐ Recover surplus food to offer it to an organization that helps people in need.



Containers, packaging, and accessories

- ☐ Provide reusable tablecloths, napkins, dishes, and utensils, which can be rented or purchased second-hand.
- ☐ If it is not possible to provide reusable dishes and utensils, choose those made of cardboard or bamboo and ensure that these are composted; otherwise opt for recyclable materials. In all cases, avoid plastic identified as compostable, which is not currently composted in our facilities in Quebec.
- ☐ Choose buffet-style meals rather than box lunches to reduce containers and packaging, and to avoid food waste (users can serve the portion size appropriate for them).
- ☐ To make sorting easier, avoid having several types of containers (compostable, recyclable, waste).
- ☐ Offer condiments and beverages in bulk (sugar, salt, pepper, ketchup, milk, cream, water, juice, etc.). Provide plant-based milk for coffee.
- ☐ When extending invitations, suggest that participants bring their own reusable bottle, cup, plate, and utensils.
- ☐ Provide containers to take home leftovers or ask participants to bring some.
- ☐ Use water pitchers, provide places to refill bottles, and limit the sale or distribution of single-use water bottles and other beverages in individual bottles.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 4: _____

5. Manage waste responsibly

- ☐ Plan ahead for the recovery and safe disposal of all waste, including hazardous waste, batteries, office accessories, aerosol bottles, etc.
- ☐ It is preferable to have a limited number of full sorting stations (compostable, recyclable, waste) rather than several trash cans or individual recycling bins spread all over the site. If possible, provide this sorting station at the entrance-exit and in the food area.
- ☐ Ensure that sorting stations are visible from a distance (display, flag).
- ☐ Clearly identify what goes in each bin and ensure that participants sort their waste.
- ☐ Plan to have employees or volunteers at sorting stations to guide waste sorting.
- ☐ Remove all waste left on the site during and after the event to avoid attracting animals and creating nuisances.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 5: _____

6. Promote sustainable modes of transport

- ☐ Inform participants of alternative means of transport available, other than solo car driving, to get to the event, for example by providing a map of public transport routes and timetables.
- ☐ Provide information about the amenities available on site or nearby (electric vehicle terminals, bicycle racks, etc.) to encourage people to choose sustainable modes of transport.
- ☐ Add secure bicycle racks.
- ☐ Provide a shuttle service to transport participants between the various event sites.
- ☐ Encourage carpooling.

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 6: _____

7. Continuously improve

- ☐ Add up the number of actions completed and challenge yourself to do more at each occasion!
- ☐ Conduct a survey of stakeholders to determine their assessment of the eco-responsible measures put in place and areas for improvement. Take stock of the positive actions and the less successful ones, and set improvement goals for the next event.
- ☐ Calculate the greenhouse gases generated by transportation for the event and plan to offset these by paying for tree planting, for example. Set a reduction target for future events, because for climate protection, reduction is more effective than offsetting.
- ☐ Measure the quantities of residual materials (compostable, recyclable, waste) collected, establish a ratio per participant, and set reduction objectives for future events.
- ☐ Consider having your event certified to the [BNQ 9700-253](#) standard on responsible event management or register to win a [Vivats](#) award!

Calculate the number of actions completed in section 7: _____

Add the total number of actions completed in the seven sections: _____

References and resources

[Conseil québécois des événements écoresponsables](#) Quebec Council for Eco-Responsible Events

[Répertoire des fournisseurs écoresponsables](#) Directory of eco-responsible suppliers (for caterers, tableware rental, etc.)

[Répertoire des entreprises en économie sociale](#) Directory of social economy companies

[Guide des produits promotionnels écoresponsables](#) (équiterre) Guide to eco-responsible promotional products

[Loge-végane.png \(669×857\)](#) ([evenementecoresponsable.com](#)) (vegetarian menu ideas)

[PlanetAir](#), [Carbone Boréal](#), [Carbone ScolÉre](#) (for carbon calculation and compensation)