

Town of Erie

Zero Waste Meetings Policy



Effective Date: May 31, 2022	Revision Date:	Prepared By: Diane Ernst, Sustainability Specialist
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Policy Purpose:

To show how easy it is to have zero waste meetings and by doing so divert valuable recyclable and compostable materials from being wasted in landfills. Leading by example, we will encourage town-wide waste reduction, recycling, and composting, which will reduce climate emissions, create green jobs, and conserve natural resources.

This policy applies to all Town staff and all Town meetings and events.

Policy:

All meetings hosted by Town staff must follow the Zero Waste Guidelines outlined below.

Zero Waste Guidelines:

- Planning the meeting:
 - Use only reusable, recyclable, or compostable items. See the [Zero Waste Meeting Toolkit](#) and the [Checklist for Caterers](#) for assistance.
 - Notify attendees the meeting will follow zero waste guidelines (use the sample language found in the Tools & Resources section below).
 - Ask attendees to bring their own water bottle or other items to maximize waste diversion.
 - Do not use single use items such as single-use water bottles, plastic bags, expanded polystyrene, plastic utensils, stir sticks, straws, disposable decorations, balloons, pre-packaged goodie bags, or individually wrapped promotional items.
 - Ensure waste stations are accessible, and all three bins are located together.
- During the meeting:
 - Make sure the waste stations include three types of containers; and
 - are appropriate in number and size to handle the expected quantity of solid waste landfill, compostable materials, and recyclable materials;
 - bear appropriate signage and identify the type of solid waste to be contained; and
 - are placed together as a waste station to provide users convenient access and education.
- After the meeting:
 - The meeting organizer must:
 - Check for contamination and ensure all landfill, recycling, and compostable items are in the correct bin; sort as needed.
 - Return the triple bins and signage to the original location if borrowed from a break room or nearby location.
 - If bins are full, contact your Facilities point of contact and communicate the need for an out of schedule cleaning.

Tools and Resources:

- [Zero Waste Meetings Toolkit](#) provides staff with:
 - A zero waste meetings checklist.
 - Preferred recyclable and compostable office supplies and flatware items.

- A zero waste [Checklist for Catering](#).
- Triple bins available in each facility and breakrooms.
- Appropriate signage.
 - [Landfill](#)
 - [Recycle](#)
 - [Compost](#)
- Sample language to send to meeting attendees: “The Town of Erie strives to be a zero waste community. All items used at this meeting will be reusable, recyclable, or compostable. Please plan accordingly (bring your own drink container and utensils!) to help us eliminate harmful landfill waste from being used at this meeting.”

Additional Information:

- One-size doesn't usually fit all circumstances and the Sustainability Division wants to help you to make your meeting a zero waste success. Please contact SustainableErie@erieco.gov with questions or concerns.

This policy is hereby approved and adopted on this 31 day of May, 2022.

DocuSigned by:
Malcolm Fleming
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Malcolm Fleming, Town Administrator

Revision History

Date of Change	Responsible	Summary of Change