



# ATHLETIC & PERFORMANCE SPACES SITE AUDIT FOR RECYCLING

## WHO IS THIS FOR?

Anybody interested in assessing or improving their waste/recycling needs and existing programs. Best practices pertain to sporting events, tailgating, and more.

# ATHLETIC & PERFORMANCE SPACES SITE AUDIT FOR RECYCLING



## PLAN AROUND HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS OF THE CAMPUS.

**BEHIND THE SCENES CARDBOARD BOXES:** For most events, there is limited inventory kept on site. Everything is brought in for the event – typically in cardboard boxes. Make sure there is sufficient capacity to handle a lot of stuff in a short time period.

**#10 CANS AND OTHER FOODSERVICE CONTAINERS:** Concessions use a lot of bulk ingredients in large tin cans, glass and plastic jars. These take up a lot of space in bins, requiring larger capacities or some ability to flatten the tin and plastic once rinsed clean.

**EXTRA EVENT PROGRAMS:** Keep any eye out for this paper recycling opportunity after an event. Typically, other than a few copies kept for archival purposes, extra programs [often cases full of them] are left behind after an event.

**FOR PATRONS** Bins are typically placed in lobbies, mezzanines [theaters and indoor stadiums], or near the exits of bleachers [for outdoor football, baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey or track & field events]

Bottle & can recycling potential depends on how beverages are

served. Are there bottled or canned beverages [soda, water, or alcohol]? If so, then plan on trash bins being at least “doubles” with parallel access and one compartment for trash and one for recycling.

Paper recycling potential depends on what is being given away for programs or other advertising. Consider at least one bin for paper near main exits for unwanted programs. Provide a waste bin next to it as well to minimize contamination.

Most patrons are guests to campus and may not be familiar with your recycling program making restrictive openings and well-labeled bins critical.

How accessible are the bins [both to patrons and collection crews]? Who will empty them? How will they do so in a way that does not disrupt the event?

**VIP AREAS AND EVENTS** Many events have a special VIP area or event that is separate from the main event for special sponsors, donors or boosters. These are often before or after the main event, but may be in a special section [e.g. luxury boxes at larger stadiums].

Typically higher quality food and beverages are served here, along with that, there are higher aesthetics and expectations.

Bottle & can recycling potential depends on how beverages are served. There are typically more single serve bottles (e.g. individually bottled water) at such events. If so, plan on bins “doubling” as waste with another compartment for recycling, providing parallel access in one bin.

Be sure to provide ample collection containers for recycling for behind the scenes servers.

- Even if concessions are happening in disposable cups, chances are some beverages (e.g. wine) are being poured from recyclable containers.
- Also, as with the main event, most stuff is being brought into the event in cardboard boxes so there is significant potential for cardboard recycling.

Paper recycling potential depends on what is being given away for programs or other advertising. Consider at least one bin for paper near main exits for unwanted programs.

**TAILGATING AND OTHER PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES** What is allowed for tailgating varies from campus to campus and venue to venue, but there is the potential for an entire event before the main event.

Predominately bottles & cans are generated at pre-events, though they’re less uniform than at the main event.

Plan to have more capacity than you need and containers that are difficult to tip over. The last thing you want is broken glass from spilled recycling bins all over a parking lot. Consider

something other than semi-automated carts or something to contain semi-automated carts to keep them from falling over.

Make sure to have special containers for hot ashes. Otherwise there is significant potential that ashes or coals will be improperly disposed of in a trash or recycling container with the potential to start a fire.

In bottle bill states, expect significant scavenging. You may not want to completely eliminate the scavenging (after all, they are doing the collection for you at no cost). However, if you don’t actively prohibit scavenging, at least establish some parameters (no bothering patrons, no getting into dumpsters, no leaving behind a mess outside the containers, etc.) to minimize liability and the risk of problems.

**PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES** Athletic and performing arts events offer a number of potential opportunities to promote recycling.

Before taking advantage of those opportunities, ask yourself (and the folks letting you promote), what are you promoting?

- Recycling/sustainability in general
- Recycling/sustainability on campus
- Specifically what or where to recycle at this particular venue
- If not promoting this, how else will patrons know? Are bins so prevalent and so well labeled that this is unneeded?
- Can be some combination of one or more of the above
- How are you promoting?



*Plan to have more capacity than you need and containers that are difficult to tip over. The last thing you want is broken glass from spilled recycling bins all over a parking lot.*



- Ad on jumbotron?
- Sign on fence with other advertisers?
- Display table somewhere near the main entrance or exit or near the refreshment area?
- Passive media such as posterboard sized signs in foyers or table tents near refreshment stands?
- Try to find a theme that will resonate with the audience. [e.g. Inter-campus or intra-campus recycling competition at athletic events.]

**CLEANING UP SEATS/STANDS AFTER EVENT** No matter how good your setup, there will be patrons who leave their waste up in the stands after the event when they leave.

When cleaning up after the event, make sure that cleanup crews have an extra collection container or bag to separate out any recyclables.

When planning the event and deciding on the number of collection barrels needed, be sure to plan on having extras for after event cleanup.

If the event is in a bottle bill state, there will be at least an attempt at scavenging after the event. The amount of scavenging that occurs is as much a function of security at the venue after the event as anything else.

## TAKEAWAYS

Provide bins for employee AND patron recycling

- Concessions generate a lot of recyclables and may need high capacity bins
- VIP servers may be pouring from glass bottles requiring a large recycling bin
- In VIP areas, higher aesthetic bins help meet sponsor/donor expectations

From an operational standpoint:

- Not everyone will be familiar with your recycling program making good labeling key
- in bottle-bill states, scavenging may be inevitable. Consider locking bins or other policies.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**PARALLEL ACCESS** Having the same system for both trash and recycling. Involves co-locating the trash and recycling in visibly different well-labeled bins.

- If you have a trash can without an adjoining recycling bin, too often recyclables will be thrown into the trash.
- If you have a recycling bin without an adjoining trash can, too often trash will be thrown into the recycling, contaminating the recycling and resulting in an entire bin full of recyclables being discarded as trash.

**RESTRICTIVE OPENINGS** Having different shaped openings that easily communicate which material goes into which container.

- Typically involves long thin slot for paper and round hole for bottles & cans.
- Size of bottle and can hole can be a big issue. Too small and it can't accommodate a standard 2-liter bottle. Too big and it's not obvious that it's a restrictive opening.
- Restrictive slots can also be cut into cardboard dumpsters (a much thicker and wider version of the paper slot). Encourages or forces people to flatten their cardboard box to get it into the dumpster.

**SEMI-AUTOMATED CARTS** Made by several different companies [e.g. Toter].

- Typically come in some variation of 90-gallon, 60-gallon, and 30-gallon sizes.
- Designed to be dumped hydraulically by special cart dumper attached to a truck or compactor. There are also some stand-alone cart dumpers that can be used to dump into other containers.
- Typically have 2 large rear wheels that can be tilted back onto like a handtruck. Most come with only the two rear wheels, but some [e.g. Toter] are available with front casters so they can be wheeled without tipping.

**DUAL STREAM** Collecting recyclables in two categories, typically one for mixed paper [including cardboard] and one for commingled bottles & cans.

**DUAL STREAM PLUS** A modified version of dual stream in which cardboard is kept separate from either paper or bottles & cans.

**SINGLE STREAM** Collecting all recyclables (paper, cardboard and bottles & cans) together in one bin and sending to special facility to sort it all out.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**ROGER GUZOWSKI** Roger has spent more than 20 years in the recycling field and has managed award-winning campus recycling programs in both Massachusetts and California. Throughout that time, Roger has been one of the more prolific public speakers about recycling in the country, having presented in almost every region of the country and for a broad spectrum of organizations. Roger has also been a frequent contributor to several recycling list-servs and an author or contributor to several publications and primary writer of Max-R's recycle blog.

Roger has played a leadership role in several state and national collegiate recycling councils, and has been actively involved with a variety of recycling organizations including MassRecycle, the California Resource Recovery Association, the Northeast Resource Recovery Association, and the National Recycling Coalition.