

Basic Tips for Environmentally Friendly Meetings

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You have the power to make a difference. Just start by adopting a few common sense policies that will not sacrifice the attendee experience. In fact, it will probably enhance their experience. Attendees can feel good about participating and knowing what is being done on their behalf.

Ask for...

- all catering plates, cups and glasses to be china or glass (non-disposable). If plastic, they must be washable (biodegradable or compostable is better). NO Styrofoam under any circumstances.
- condiments to be served in bulk containers, not individual servings, to save packaging. This includes sugar, creamer, butter, cream cheese, etc.
- all napkins to be cloth whenever possible. Use coasters instead of cocktail napkins.
- separate recycling bins for attendees to use at all catered functions, registration, and especially on the exhibit floor.
- all handouts to be printed on two sides using post-consumer recycled paper.
- recycled-content promotional products when deciding on pens, bags, shirts and caps. There are beautiful awards made of recycled glass.
- the hotels not to change the sheets and towels daily unless requested by the guest.
- the hotels not to replace the amenities daily unless they are gone. Use of soap and shampoo dispensers would be optimal.
- the hotels' housekeeping staff to shut blinds and turn down the heat/air conditioning during the day in rooms while attendees are gone.
- information about the facilities' recycling program for all areas.
- all leftover food to be donated to a local food bank.

Reduce...

- the amount of handouts. Make them available on the web site.
- the size of the registration brochure and make the rest of the information available on-line.

These tips are just a starting place, but the impact of even these few changes can be dramatic. It has been our experience that most hotels and meeting facilities are willing to work with you—they benefit as well.

For more information or resources contact us at Meeting Strategies Worldwide. Nancy Wilson nancy@meetingstrategiesworldwide.com or Amy Spatrisano amy@meetingstrategiesworldwide.com.