



Issue 19: July 2009: The *Special Event* Issue!

Special Event Recycling Containers

Special events like outdoor festivals, county fairs and family reunions are some of the best things about summer. While those special events can create memories that last a lifetime, they can also create a legacy of waste.

Luckily, the OVWRC has special event recycling containers that can help event organizers green their event. These containers are sturdy metal frames which you line with a clear plastic bag. They are used to collect container recyclables like plastic bottles, pop cans, and drink boxes.

Residents and businesses within [OVWRC partner municipalities](#) can borrow these special event recycling containers for free. Event organizers must read the [Special Event Recycling Container Flyer](#), and sign and submit the [request form](#) at least one week prior to your event. Quantities are limited, so first come first served. Special event recycling is one more way that we are “working together to walk lightly on the environment”.

Bottled Water

Bottled water is a staple at summertime special events. While it may seem like a healthy alternative to a sugar laden can of pop, bottled water is taking an unforgiving toll on the health of the environment.

Producing bottled water is a drain on natural resources and energy. Imagine a bottle of water filled a quarter of the way up with oil. That’s how much oil was needed to produce the bottle.ⁱ And as for water, well...it takes more water to produce the bottle than the bottle itself can hold.ⁱⁱ

Canadians consume more than two billion litres of bottled water a year, yet we are privileged to have some of the cleanest tap water on the planet.ⁱⁱⁱ In fact, our water is so clean that bottled water companies are buying our tap water to fill their bottles.^{iv} So, what’s the sustainable solution to staying hydrated in the summer heat? Make it a habit to carry your own reusable stainless steel or “Bisphenol A” free water bottle around with you. By using a reusable water bottle you will be saving money, conserving natural resources and reducing energy consumption. I’ll drink to that!

Do You Know Where it Goes?

Some materials make us think twice before we throw them away. Is it recyclable? Can it be composted? Or is it garbage?

Plastic Cutlery

Plastic cutlery, a frequent guest at special events, is not recyclable and must be placed in your garbage. A waste reduction tip may be to use reusable cutlery (borrow cutlery from friends and family, or consider purchasing some inexpensively at a goodwill store), or to serve only finger foods at your special event. Guests won’t need knives and forks to devour tasty hotdogs and hamburgers, chips and veggie sticks!

BBQ Ashes

BBQ ashes are garbage. Please put cold ashes in a combustible container (ie: cardboard box, paper or plastic bag) and place it in with your garbage.

Re-Use It!

Cereal box liners are garbage. Before you throw them out, however, consider reusing them as covers for your chopping block when you are cutting meat! Simply cut open the plastic liner and spread it on top of your chopping block. Then cut, chop or dice your meat as you normally would, all the while avoiding contaminating your chopping block with salmonella or other bacteria.

ⁱ Owen, James. "Bottled Water isn't Healthier than Tap, Report Reveals," *National Geographic News*. February 24, 2006. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/02/0224_060224_bottled_water.html

ⁱⁱ "Message in a Bottle," *The David Suzuki Foundation Website*. May 16, 2008.

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/about_us/Dr_David_Suzuki/Article_Archives/weekly05160801.asp

ⁱⁱⁱ "Message in a Bottle," *The David Suzuki Foundation Website*. May 16, 2008.

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/about_us/Dr_David_Suzuki/Article_Archives/weekly05160801.asp

^{iv} "Bottled Water: Quenching a Planet's Thirst," *CBC News In Depth*, August 20th, 2008.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/consumers/bottled-water.html>

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