



RECYCLES



Event Recycling Toolkit

Whether your event's as small as a family get-together or as big as a community festival, you can recycle there. This toolkit contains a checklist, tips, printable signs and other resources to make your next event better for Northwest Arkansas' circular economy and environment. We'll be focusing on **cans**, **bottles** and **food waste**.

HEADS UP: If you'd prefer to outsource this whole process, local business Food Loops specializes in event composting and recycling, handling all of the equipment and personnel needs. [Learn more at their website](#). If you're using a waste-removal service, your hauler may also offer recycling.

Step 1: Determine what kinds of waste your event will create.

□ **Will there be drinks?** **NO:** Easy enough, on to page 2.
 YES

Do they come in cans or plastic bottles?

NO: Check the other options (right) before moving on.

YES: Great! Once they're empty, cans and plastic bottles stamped with #1 or #2, including typical water, soda or tea bottles, are simple to recycle.

Do they come in glass bottles?

NO: No glass, no worries. Keep going.

YES: Glass bottles can be recycled in many communities but run the risk of breaking. Avoid them around waterways. If you collect glass, do so carefully with sturdy, dedicated bins instead of bags.

Do they come in disposable cups?



NO: If it's a no on all three, reusable containers are a great choice.

YES: Consider canned or bottled drinks or BPI-certified compostable cups available from local sellers like [Food Loops](#) (see Composting in Step 2 for other important info).




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- **Will there be food?**  **NO:** Go on to the next question.
 **YES:** You can compost food scraps (see Composting under Step 2 for more). Consider also using certified compostable food trays and utensils or choosing foods that don't need them.

- **Will there be trash that wasn't covered above?**  **NO:** Congratulations, you could be on your way to a zero-waste event.


YES: Cardboard, paper and steel cans can be recycled the same way as cans and bottles. For any variety of trash, reducing is even better for the environment than recycling. Try ideas like limiting giveaways and handouts or encouraging attendees to bring their own reusable bottles.

HEADS UP: Will food trucks or other third-party vendors join your event? Have them agree beforehand to use recyclable or compostable containers or otherwise decrease the trash they'll generate in order to participate. (This guide can help them, too!) 

Step 2: Equip your event.

- **Loaner equipment**, such as portable stands for ClearStream bags that can collect plastic bottles and aluminum cans (no glass), is available from several local governments within those governments' boundaries.

Benton County Solid Waste District: ClearStream stands, a transporter cart or an enclosed cargo trailer are available with a refundable deposit. Get the district's [guidelines](#), [application form](#), [release form](#) and [post-event report form](#).

Boston Mountain Solid Waste District (Washington and Madison counties): ClearStream stands, cage or enclosed trailer, bins and other equipment are available with a valid credit card (charged only if needed to replace equipment). [Fill out the application form](#).

City of Fayetteville: ClearStream stands are available. Call 479-718-7685 for more, plus you can [check the city's tips](#).

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville: ClearStream stands and measuring equipment to calculate diversion rate are available. [Contact the Office for Sustainability](#) for more.





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HEADS UP: Get enough ClearStreams or other receptacles to pair them with every trash can, ideally near high-traffic zones like the entrance/exit. You may need to separate cans from bottles later, so devoting one stand at each station to cans and another to bottles can be helpful.

Two or three waste stations can be enough for events with hundreds of people – as long as you monitor them and empty them when full.

- ❑ For a more DIY approach, you can use **your own bins and other receptacles. Make sure they're labeled!** Use big, clear text, pictures or both, like the easy printable signs in this toolkit. Other good options are available from the [University of Arkansas Office for Sustainability](#) or [Recycle Across America](#).

Composting: You can sign up for pickup service through a company like [Food Loops](#) or, for residents in and near Fayetteville, collect food scraps yourself to take to one of the city's 24-7 drop-offs.

Use sturdy buckets lined with BPI-certified compostable bags (brands such as EcoSafe or Natur-Bag). If you'll also collect food trays or cutlery for composting, be sure they're also certified.

- ❑ Finally, enlist some **volunteers or staff members** for recycle duty. You'll need them to keep an eye on your recycling stations, replace full receptacles and keep out trash.

Step 3: The big day.

- ❑ Once recycling receptacles are placed by trash cans, throw in a couple of the appropriate cans or bottles beforehand to give a good example for attendees.
- ❑ Have volunteers or staff members **monitor waste stations the whole time or at frequent intervals.** This is to replace full bags but even more importantly to catch contamination – trash, essentially – before it becomes a major issue and potentially ruins your recycling.

HEADS UP: Use gloves and a simple trash picker from the grocery or hardware store to pluck incorrect items from your recycling receptacles.

- ❑ Tell your attendees about the work you've done! Public announcements and the people monitoring waste stations can educate attendees about the location of recycling stations, which items you're collecting and why you made all of this effort. Remember, a good recyclable is clean, empty and in the right place.



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Step 4: Turn in your recycling.

- ❑ If it's a small event and you have curbside recycling pickup at your location, add your collections to your curbside cart, and you're done (make sure the lid can close). Note: Most curbside recycling programs don't take glass, and none take food waste.
- ❑ If curbside service won't do the trick, **community drop-offs** for bottles and cans are available throughout the region; this toolkit includes a guide to those locations. Leave only what the center accepts, and don't overfill containers or leave materials on the ground.

HEADS UP: For large events with lots of materials collected, stick to the larger, staffed drop-off centers in [Bella Vista](#), [Fayetteville](#), [Huntsville](#), [Prairie Grove](#), [Rogers](#), [Siloam Springs](#) or [Springdale](#) (and consider calling ahead in case they need to prepare).

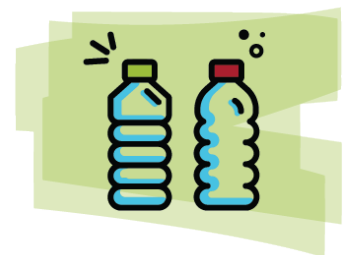
Composting: For those in and near Fayetteville, find the city's 24-7 food waste drop-offs [on the city's website](#).

- ❑ Return any borrowed equipment.
- ❑ Pat yourself on the back! You've conserved natural resources, supported local recycling programs and jobs, connected those programs with more of your neighbors, and gained tools and experience for your next event.

HEADS UP: Spread the word about your accomplishments on social media by tracking your recycling collections before turning them in. And please tell us at NWA Recycles how your events go and how helpful this toolkit is for you with [our online contact form](#).



NWA Recycles is a program of the Northwest Arkansas Council dedicated to improving recycling in the region and made possible through support from Walmart. Thanks also to Benton County Solid Waste District, Boston Mountain Solid Waste District, the City of Fayetteville, Food Loops, Pack Rat Outdoor Center, The Recycling Partnership and the University of Arkansas for helping create this toolkit.



RECYCLE



Bottles



RECYCLE



Cans



RECYCLE



Cans & Bottles



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ORGANICS



LANDFILL



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Drop-off Guide: Standard recyclables

These are the basics – public drop-off locations that take the typical set of recyclables (they may take more as well; see our other drop-off guides). They are open to all, even residents of other cities (which are ordered here approximately north to south).

- Aluminum or steel cans
- Plastic bottles (stamped #1 or #2)
- Cardboard and paper
- Glass jars and bottles

Benton County

City	Location and contact	Hours
Bella Vista	400 Pinion Bluff Drive, 479-876-5343	24-6, closed Sun.
Garfield (no paper accepted)	14639 S. Wimpy Jones Road	24-7
Gravette (no paper accepted)	800 Plant Access Road	24-7
Bentonville	2000 NW A St., 479-271-5954	M-Sat. 8AM-4PM
Centeron (no paper accepted)	5702 Brookside Drive, 479-795-0751	24-7
Decatur (no paper accepted)	310 Maple Ave.	24-7
Rogers (also takes polystyrene)	2300 N. Arkansas Ave., 479-621-1185	24-7
Gentry (no paper accepted)	413 W. Main St.	24-7
Siloam Springs	1108 E. Ashley St.	M-F 7:30AM-3:30PM, Sat. 9AM-noon

Washington County

City	Location and contact	Hours
Springdale	1809 Lowell Road, 479-249-4558	M, W, F, 8AM-4PM
Goshen (monthly)	244 Clark St.	3rd Sat. 9AM-noon
Elm Springs (cardboard only)	289 Jayroe Ave.	24-7
Fayetteville	735 W. North St. or 1420 S. Happy Hollow Road, 479-575-8398	24-7



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City	Location and contact	Hours
Elkins (monthly)	2030 Arkansas 74	3rd Mon. 10AM-3PM
Greenland	170 N. Letitia Ave.	M-F 8AM-4PM; Sat. 8AM-noon
Prairie Grove	11398 Bond Road, 479-846-3005	M-F 7AM-3PM; Sat. 8-11AM
West Fork	134 N. Campbell Ave.	24-7
Winslow	108 N. Winslow Blvd.	24-7 for cardboard, otherwise 1st Sat. 9AM-noon

Madison County

City	Location and contact	Hours
Huntsville	173 Madison 6553, 479-738-6351	Tue.-F 8AM-3:30PM, Sat. 9AM-noon
St. Paul	17669 Arkansas 16, 479-677-2036	W, Sat. 9AM-1PM