

2014 Guide

# Sustainable Meetings, Conferences and Events

on the University of Saskatchewan Campus



**The University's goal:** divert as much waste as possible from the landfill.

With our **single-stream program**, you no longer have to sort.  
Recycling is easy!

Now we just need your help. By holding sustainable events, conferences and meetings, together we can reach this goal!

## Why Host a Green Event?

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- To help organizations make environmental cost-effective choices through energy conservation and waste reduction measures.
- To create opportunities to educate participants, organizers, and suppliers about the benefits of green meetings.
- To create a positive public image.
- To showcase environmental technologies and strategies that can result in increased business opportunities for the exhibiting companies.
- To better attract and retain employees.

## Tips for Success

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- Establish green goals as soon as possible.
- Delegate responsibility and establish a monitoring system.
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to achieve your goals.
- Consider involving community groups and schools to help out. This is also a good opportunity to engage others in your environmental efforts.
- Consider visible and non-visible aspects of your event.
- Communicate regularly and troubleshoot often, especially if it is your first attempt. Never hesitate to contact us if you run into any problems!

## For More Information

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Sustainability Initiatives Liaison  
306.966.2282  
sustainability.liaison@usask.ca

This document was researched and developed from the 2009 Green Conference Guide by Kelsey O'Brien, Claire Levesque, Kristine Spence and Melanie Elliott.

## How to Use the Guide

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This guide is a comprehensive tool intended to help organizers make events, conferences and meetings environmentally responsible at the University of

Saskatchewan. Use these checklists below (when applicable) to begin making your conference green!

**Red font** indicates crucial waste reduction practices.



**Checklist 1: Office Procedures** is for the organizing team. It gets your team started on the right tack as soon as possible even before the meeting has begun. This checklist also includes items that can be useful for any office looking to be a little greener.



**Checklist 2: Logistics** is useful for any meeting because it addresses basic organizational tasks such as registration, assembling meeting materials, and managing presentations.



**Checklist 3: Food and Beverage** should be used if there is any food service provided.



**Checklist 4: Transportation** applies to all travel for attendees, meeting organizers, and contracted services.



**Checklist 5: Accommodations** should be used if meeting attendees require accommodations. If the hotel is providing meals or transportation, refer them to those checklists.



**Checklist 6: Products and Services** should be used in procuring goods and services for an event.



**Checklist 7: Post-Conference Follow Up** is provided to help refine your group's sustainability program for future years and ensure the satisfaction of all who contribute to the sustainability effort.



## Checklist 1: Office Procedures

### Paper

- Minimize paper usage.
  - Send and store information electronically.
  - Avoid unnecessary mailing. Keep mailing and circulation lists up-to-date. When paper mail is necessary, use postcards rather than separate sheets of paper and envelopes.
  - Re-use file folders and envelopes (ex. placing a label—with water-based glue—over the old address).
  - Collect paper that has been used on one side only. This paper can be re-used for fax cover sheets, notepaper, draft printouts and photocopies.
  - Avoid photocopying mistakes. Ensure all staff members know how to operate the photocopier correctly, and the photocopier is well-maintained.
  - Print smart. When printing is absolutely necessary, print on both sides. Keep documents as short as possible. Edit on-screen, rather than printing unnecessary drafts. Taking into account readability, use smaller font size and minimize margins and white spaces.
    - Limit the use of colour (increasing the number of colours may increase energy consumption). Avoid using solid blocks of ink which impedes de-inking. Avoid printing right to the edge of the paper.
  - Use paper products with certified recycled content or high proportion of postconsumer content. Avoid chlorine-bleached paper.

### Travel for Meetings

- Minimize business travel by using teleconferencing and video conferencing.
- Schedule meetings that allow time for people to walk, bike, or take public transit.
- Choose venues that are in locations that can be easily accessed by public transit, foot or bike.

### Waste and Recycling:

- Use reusable products (e.g., rechargeable batteries).
- Have a central area where co-workers can bring unwanted office supplies, (cardboard boxes, extra stationary items, etc.) to be reused in the office.
- Collect printer toner. Supreme Basics, the university's contracted supplier for office and IT supplies, will take back your empty toner and ink cartridges as part of their sustainability program and ensure they are properly recycled. Simply return them to the Supreme Basics driver on the next visit, or contact the dedicated customer service team, or add a note on your next online order to request a pickup. All contacts for the program provided by Supreme Basics can be found on the [Purchasing Services website](#).
- If you need assistance with office recycling and waste reduction, contact Campus Recycling at [odili.obi@usask.ca](mailto:odili.obi@usask.ca).
- Buy smart. Avoid disposable dishes, cutlery, straws, stir-sticks, napkins, etc. Instead, use durable mugs, dishes, and cutlery, and keep extras for visitors. Remember that compostable dishes and cutlery will still end up in the landfill if you have no access to a compost facility.**
  - Buy coffee, cream, sugar, snacks, mustard/ketchup, etc., in bulk. Avoid single-serve containers and packages.**

**TIP for minimum margins:** Change the margins to 0. After clicking OK, click “Fix” on the window that pops up and Word will automatically set the measurements to the smallest printable margins.

- Use coffee filters made of reusable cloth, steel, or unbleached recycled paper.

## Lights and Equipment

- Turn off lights, taps, and equipment when not in use. For “Light Off” stickers for your switch plates, phone the Sustainability Initiatives Liaison (966-2282). Report dripping taps or other plumbing leaks to maintenance personnel.
- Ensure that the energy savings features are enabled on all electronic equipment.
- Buy smart. Consider ENERGY STAR® rated photocopiers, laser printers with duplex capability, and to plain-paper fax machines. For more information, see the university's Sustainable Purchasing Guide: [http://www.usask.ca/fsd/resources/documents/puchasing/sustainability/Small\\_Appliances.pdf](http://www.usask.ca/fsd/resources/documents/puchasing/sustainability/Small_Appliances.pdf)**

- Consider buying multi-use machines (printer/scanner/fax/copier in one).



## Checklist 2: Logistics

### Pre-Conference

- Advise participants in advance that the conference will be green. In advertisements and registration confirmations, mention the conferences commitment to help reduce the University's waste, and outline your expectations for how these will be met.
- Make sure all staff and volunteers understand your commitment to help reduce the University's waste and make the event as green as possible.
- Confirm registrations by e-mail or phone.
- Post Idle Free Zone signs around pick up and drop off areas. To request signage contact the Sustainability Initiatives Liaison (966-2282).
- Ask participants to bring their own pens and paper.
- E-mail conference materials to participants and make it available online. Encourage people to print double-sided or on scrap paper if they choose to make a hard copy.
- When choosing gifts, prizes or swag for attendees or presenters, ensure that they are durable, minimally packaged, made from recycled materials and produced locally if available (see Appendix 1: Local/Canadian/Sustainable Businesses).
- Please consult the university's Sustainable Purchasing Guide:  
[http://www.usask.ca/fsd/colleges\\_depts\\_research/buying\\_goods/sustainability/index.php](http://www.usask.ca/fsd/colleges_depts_research/buying_goods/sustainability/index.php)

### The Conference

- Ensure that program facilities have "Light Off" stickers on all switch plate covers. To request stickers, contact the Sustainability Initiatives Liaison (966-2282).
- During tours or when introducing training facilities, point out garbage and recycling bins.

- Provide the registration package in a reusable holder (ex. reusable cotton bag, or a durable binder/folder made from recycled plastic or paper).
- On daily basis, remind participants, staff and volunteers of waste reduction and other environmental opportunities and thank them for their help.**
- Reduce paper.
  - Check people in electronically.
  - Limit the distribution of handouts/brochures. Have someone supervise the brochures and give pamphlets to those with genuine needs or interest.
  - Use environmentally friendly name tags:
    - Print on recycled paper;
    - Avoid name tags that require plastic holders, or reuse the plastic holders by requesting the attendees to return them.
  - Rent temporary signage. If purchased, it should be durable, generic and undated so that it can be reused (ex. plastic signs with removable letters).
- Request recycling bins and services for events held on campus through the Waste Prevention Coordinator (966-1282). Make sure you constantly monitor them and ensure that they are conveniently located and large/diverse enough to accommodate the expected type and amount of waste.
- Make sure presenters/guest speakers know about your green conference.
  - Provide them with reusable whiteboards, blackboards, overheads and slides and avoid paper flip charts. If you must use paper flip charts, they should be recyclable, and made of recycled content. Use non-toxic low-odour markers.
  - Ask presenters to turn off overhead and slide projectors when not in use (small stickers on overhead projectors can remind presenters of this request).
  - If participants request handouts of the presentation, print multiple slides per page.

## Checklist 3: Food and Beverage

**TIP for printing multiple slides in PowerPoint:** after selecting “Print” in PowerPoint, find “Print What” and choose “Handouts” from the menu. You can choose how many pages per sheet, and in what format.





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- Provide tap water instead of bottled water, and ask that participants bring their water bottles. Pitchers of water or water coolers may be available on campus. Contact James McFarland at Hospitality Services: 966.6794 for more information.
  - Provide recycling and compost bins for fruit and vegetable scraps. Contact the Waste Prevention Coordinator at 966-1282 to request containers.

### If attendees are bringing their own lunches:

- Ask attendees, staff and volunteers to bring Waste-Free Bagged Meals.

### If Catering:

- Use on-campus caterers in order to reduce gasoline use during delivery.
- Inform caterers of the exact number of participants to avoid waste. Modify the quantity when necessary.
- Discuss sustainable options with the caterer (see Appendix 1: Local/Canadian/Sustainable Businesses), and when possible...
  - Choose organic goods, wines and beers.
  - Order vegetarian options. Vegetables and grains require less energy to grow than what is required for raising livestock.
  - Buy fair trade and organic options for coffee and tea.
  - Use reusable or compostable dishes, cutlery and linens (ex. no paper or Styrofoam cups, plastic cutlery, disposable doilies, etc.).
  - Avoid single-serve containers for food and condiments (e.g., mustard/ketchup packets). Provide these in bulk or larger containers.**



## Checklist 4: Transportation

- Include information about public transit in the registration package and in pre-event communications. Consider providing complementary bus tickets or setting up a carpooling system.
- For larger conferences, provide shuttle buses for participants, volunteers and staff to avoid individual transportation. This way, nobody gets lost either!
- Establish an idle free-zone around the program venue.
- During winter, use block heaters.
- Make sure your vehicle is functioning properly. A poorly maintained vehicle uses more fuel and creates more emissions:
  - Ensure no fluids are leaking onto the pavement.
  - Use a tire pressure gauge to check for under-inflated tires.
  - Check for problems such as a loose muffler.



## Checklist 5: Accommodations

- Book hotels that have an environmental policy or action plan (see Appendix 1: Local/Canadian/Sustainable Businesses). Ask them if...
  - They are certified by an eco-labeling program such as Green Leaf. For more information, contact local hotels or visit [www.topcanadianhotels.com/saskatoon-saskatchewan-hotels.html](http://www.topcanadianhotels.com/saskatoon-saskatchewan-hotels.html).
  - Environmental duties are part of staff job descriptions and if the staff receives training and regular updates on their environmental duties.
  - They have a comprehensive environmental procurement policy.
  - They subscribe to a recognized industry environmental code of practice (e.g., the Green Globe Program or the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism).





## Checklist 6: Products and Services

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- Consider if the product or service is really necessary.
- Check supplies to ensure that no comparable product is already on hand.
- Investigate the feasibility of short-term rental, leasing or borrowing the product as an alternative to purchasing.
- Request the appropriate quantity.
- Try to use the product to the end of its life and recycle.
  - Obtain the list of the product's ingredients when available.
  - Purchase products free of WHMIS-controlled substances that would require special labeling, handling and/or waste disposal practices
  - Ensure that there are no special costs involved in disposing safely of the product or any of its component parts
- Choose products that are:
  - Easy to maintain and/or economical to repair,
  - easily upgraded,
  - certified by a recognized eco-labeling program such as Energy Star, EcoLogo, Green Leaf, etc.
  - contain post-consumer recycled materials,
  - available from a local supplier,
  - minimal amount of packaging,
  - packaged in material(s) that are non-hazardous and can be recycled within available recycling programs, or that the supplier takes back the packaging for recycling,
- When choosing services:
  - Ensure the service provider's practices respect all municipal, provincial/territorial and federal environmental legislation.
  - Ensure the service provider has never been convicted of an environmental offence.
  - Ensure the service provider makes all reasonable efforts to reduce waste.
  - If appropriate, ensure the service provider has ISO 14001 environmental management system certification.
  - If appropriate, ensure the service provider properly handles hazardous materials.



## Checklist 7: Post-Conference Follow-Up

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- Complete follow-up communication electronically.
  - In follow-up e-mails, recognize everyone's greening efforts and thank all staff, volunteers, and attendees for their support.
- Prepare a report about the program's green to be placed on your website, on future brochures or advertisements, and/or distributed electronically to participants. Describe lessons learned and encourage others to make their own meetings and conferences more environmentally friendly.
- Assess the conference and identify potential ways to make the event more sustainable.
- Contact the Sustainability Coordinator (966-1236) if you have any questions about your experience. Let us know how many boxes you were able to complete!

## Appendix 1: Local/Canadian/Sustainable Businesses

### Goods and Gifts

<b>The Better Good</b>	640 Broadway Ave. <a href="http://thebettergood.com/pages/contact-and-hours">http://thebettergood.com/pages/contact-and-hours</a>	(306) 242.4663
<b>SaskMade Marketplace</b>	1621 8th St. E. <a href="http://www.saskmade.ca/">http://www.saskmade.ca/</a>	1.888.955.1832 (toll free)

### Food

<b>Saskatoon Farmers' Market</b>	414 Ave. B South <a href="http://www.saskatoonfarmersmarket.com/">http://www.saskatoonfarmersmarket.com/</a>	(306) 384.6262
<b>Dad's Nutrition</b>	1820 8th St. <a href="http://www.dadsorganicmarket.com/dads-organic-market-saskatoon/">http://www.dadsorganicmarket.com/dads-organic-market-saskatoon/</a>	(306) 373.7999
<b>Saskatoon Co-Op</b>	Various locations <a href="http://www.saskatooncoop.ca/">http://www.saskatooncoop.ca/</a>	
<b>Earthbound</b>	220-1820 8 <sup>th</sup> St. E. <a href="http://earthboundbakery.blogspot.ca/">http://earthboundbakery.blogspot.ca/</a>	(306) 955.2184

### Hotels

<b>Best Western Harvest Inn</b>	601 Spadina Crescent East <a href="http://www.bestwestern.com/ca/harvestinn">www.bestwestern.com/ca/harvestinn</a> - Eco-friendly: compliance with at least one of the national or international eco-labeling programs	1.877.999.1004
<b>Delta Bessbought</b>	Various locations <a href="http://www.deltahotels.com/en/hotels/hotels.php?hotelId=8">http://www.deltahotels.com/en/hotels/hotels.php?hotelId=8</a> - Implementation of the "Delta Greens" program to reduce their impact on the environment - Access to environmental and sustainable purchasing policy: <a href="http://www.deltahotels.com/en/greens">http://www.deltahotels.com/en/greens</a>	(306) 244.5521
<b>Travelodge Hotel</b>	106 Circle Drive <a href="http://www.travelodgesaskatoon.com/index.php">http://www.travelodgesaskatoon.com/index.php</a> - Has environmental policies: <a href="http://www.travelodgesaskatoon.com/environment.php">http://www.travelodgesaskatoon.com/environment.php</a> - Rated 3 Green Keys by the Green Key Eco-Rating Program	(306) 242.8881
<b>Park Town Hotel</b>	924 Spadina Crescent East <a href="http://www.parktownhotel.com/">http://www.parktownhotel.com/</a> - Rated 3 Green Keys by Green Key Eco-rating program	(306) 244.5564