



Learning Trunk Engagement Guide – Green Parties Trunk for Activities



Overview

With all the food, packaging, decorations and giveaways, events of any size – from small gatherings to large parties – can generate a lot of waste. With a little bit of planning, residents can make their events low- or no-waste. This trunk helps illustrate ideas for hosting greener parties. It includes party supply examples for high-waste parties, low-waste parties, and parties with organics for composting as an option.

Hennepin County can help event coordinators for larger events or celebrations develop waste-reduction plans, educate vendors, train volunteers and find collection options. Learn more at www.hennepin.us/eventrecycling.

Objective

Provide examples of different party set-ups to show residents at events visual representations of what a low-waste party could look like as well as what low waste items are available. Facilitate brainstorming and planning of an example party with the group.

Audience

Residents who plan parties for themselves, their families, and their community groups.

Barriers

To be most effective using the learning trunk, you need to know your audience's motivations around parties in order identify barriers to a low waste parties.

Barriers participants might have related to Green Parties include:

- "Disposable is easier"
- "Green products cost more"
- "I don't know what to buy"
- "I don't know what to look for"

To overcome barriers, make sure participants:

1. Are aware that waste is a problem.
2. Have experience reducing waste and resources to continue reducing waste.
3. Desire to take action to reduce waste.
4. Believe they are capable of doing it and that it makes a difference.

Activity

Have the participants work through the Green Parties Checklist (printed in the learning trunk) pretending that they are planning a party together. They can choose what type of party (birthday, holiday party, etc.) Have your group work together from planning to clean up of the party. They can discuss options and make decisions along the way. Once the checklist is complete, ask the discussion questions to wrap up the activity and consider doing one of the additional activity ideas for parties.

Green Parties Checklist

- Hennepin County Green Party Checklist (included in learning trunk)
 - If you need to print additional copies you can find it here:
 - www.hennepin.us/environmentaleducation under Environmental education activity guides and reducing waste

Discussion questions

- What are you going to do to be more low waste at your next party?
- What did you learn about greening your parties? What actions will you take to make your next party greener? What did you learn that you want to share with someone else?
- Why should we care about the products we use at our parties?
- What kind of difference would it make if everyone used low-waste items at parties?
- What do you want to learn more about?

Additional activity ideas for parties

1. Make doing dishes fun!
 - a. Many object to using reusable dishware at parties because it makes clean up difficult. Avoid this problem by making dishwashing a part of the process. Have tubs of wash and rinse water in your party area (works best if outside) to let party-goers wash their own dishes. Make it a game at kid's parties and dishes will be done before the party is over.
2. Use alternatives to balloons
 - a. Balloons do not decompose in the environment (even balloons labeled biodegradable) and provide health and safety risks to animals living there. Use alternatives to balloons at your parties. Consider using flowers or house plants to add color to your celebration.
 - b. Sponge balls can take the place of water balloons and could be made at your meeting or gathering with sponges, scissors, and string.



Contact information

- Contact Angie Ziobro at 612-348-9850 or Angela.Ziobro@hennepin.us
- Call 612-348-3777 if you have questions on the day you return the learning trunk.

Additional resources

- Environmental education activity guides (formerly toolkits) – www.hennepin.us/environmentaleducation
- Additional learning trunks – www.hennepin.us/environmentaleducation
- Request literature for your event – www.hennepin.us/environmentaleducation
- Hennepin County Green Disposal Guide – www.hennepin.us/greendisposalguide
- Large event resources – www.hennepin.us/eventrecycling
- Organics recycling – www.hennepin.us/organics
- Rethink Recycling – www.rethinkrecycling.com/events