



Your Guide to Event Greening

The Special Events At Home Edition



**Our Top 12 Tips to Green Your
Next Special Event at Home**



Together we make a difference

Perfect for Planning:

- Birthday Parties
- Holidays
- Seasonal Celebrations and more!



Green Tip # 1.

Make "Going Green" Part of Your Plan

Green events are possible, but they do require a plan!

Include it early in the planning process and think “green” every step of the way.

Allow this to guide your decisions about the event plan, food, invitations, gifts, etc.



Green Tip #2.

Share your "Green Vision" with Guests Ahead of Time

People are more likely to be open and supportive of your efforts when they are given enough time to prepare. This is especially true if guests are contributing in some way, like preparing food or bringing a dish.

Request that any contributions be brought waste-free, such as in reusable dishware and free of single use plastics or disposable containers. Take this opportunity to educate your guests on various topics like the harm of plastics, waste diversion, pesticide-free eating, climate solutions, etc.

See the Addendum for suggested phrasing for your green event.



Green Tip #3. Green Your Invitations

Invite guests by phone, e-mail or send a virtual invitation.

Some virtual invitation platforms will also include online services to help organize your event.

Free online invitations can be made on: [Canva](#), [Punchbowl](#), [Evite](#), [Paperless Post](#), etc.

Paid options with event organization features can be made on: [Paperless Post](#), [GreenVelo](#), etc.

See the Addendum for suggested phrasing for your green event.



Green Tip #4. Reconsider Traditional Gift Giving

Gifts are a lovely gesture of celebration, though many simply end up cluttering homes before being donated or thrown away.

Consider an alternative way of sharing gifts:

Request a donation to your favourite charity, like [BurlingtonGreen](#).

Request a non-perishable food item for donation to the local food bank.

Request 'The Gift of Time'. *The Gift of Time is a concept that replaces physical gifts, money or goods, with experiences, acts of kindness and sharing quality time. Examples: Home-cooked meal, walk in the park, concert or theatre tickets, a massage, eco-friendly cleaning service, etc.*

Request eco-friendly gifts only.

For children's parties, request an unwrapped book for donation to a local library, school or reading program. Simply request no gifts.

Request gifts be unwrapped or in a reusable bag. Save and re-use tissue and gift bags.

Whichever you choose, be sure to mention this when extending the invitation.

See the Addendum for suggested phrasing for gift giving requests.



Green Tip #5. **Skip Your Party Favours or Make them “Green”**

Party-favours are often full of single-use plastics and are designed for short-term use. If you must give out party-favours, make them environmentally friendly, consumable and/or practical: native seed packets, hand-made soap, home-made baked goods, etc. For children’s parties consider incorporating the party-favour with an activity: take-home crafts, pumpkin painting, cupcake decorating, etc.



Green Tip #6. **Choose Environmentally Friendly Decorations**

Skip on balloons and streamers as they end up in the landfill or can easily blow away, creating litter in the community and can be harmful to wildlife.

Get creative and try upcycling your trash into decorations.

Make your own decorations with recycled paper, or make confetti out of leaves.

Look for options made of paper or cardboard that can be reused or recycled. Avoid options with sparkles, shiny metallic elements and plastic embellishments, as these items cannot be recycled and they turn your paper items into garbage.

Look for second-hand party decorations on Facebook Marketplace or Kijiji.



Green Tip #7. Go Zero Waste

Visit Refill Centres where you can purchase ingredients and snacks in reusable containers. Shop with reusable produce and grocery bags. Refuse food options that create waste (Ex. Buy fruits and vegetables to make your own trays instead of the pre-made disposable options, make your own hummus, choose snacking options at Refill Centres instead of bagged options, etc.)

Choose reusable plates, cups, cutlery and napkins, instead of disposables. If this is not an option, use paper options that are compostable.

Be aware of "green washing", as not everything advertised as "eco-friendly", is!

Disposable dishware made of plant-based plastics are not compostable in Halton.

Always look for the "green" alternative, and if zero waste isn't possible, opt for items in glass, tin and paper instead.



Green Tip #8. Say No to Bottled Water

Bottled water is not only harmful to the environment, but it is harmful to human health too! Have water jugs or pitchers instead of bottled water. Invest in a re-usable cooler, jugs, pitchers and/or cups.

Add fresh mint, basil, cucumber or fruit to infuse your water - this not only enhances the flavour, but is also visually appealing.

Offer a 'signature drink' made in a large drink container.

Choose drink options in glass and cans over plastic bottles or tetra packs.



Green Tip #9. **Encourage Green Transit With A Fun Incentive**

Encourage your guests to walk, bike, carpool or take public transportation to your event.

Let your guests know about [Facedrive](#). Consider a prize draw or giveaway for guests who choose an eco-friendly transportation method.

Start a carpool group chat or conversation thread for guests, encouraging them to connect. You could also link the group to a digital invite.

Create a friendly competition among guests to get them involved in keeping your event green.



Green Tip #10. **Buy Seasonal, Local, Organic and if Possible, Meatless**

If you can, visit the farmers market to support local farmers.

If you can, choose Ontario produce.

If you can, choose what is in season.

If you can, choose organic options.

Educate your guests on the positive environmental impacts of [eating local](#), [organic](#) and [meatless](#).



Green Tip # 11.

Go Green With Your Suppliers (Caterers, bakers, entertainment, etc.)

Before you order or book anything, find out what they can do to make their offering more environmentally friendly.

Ask where they source their ingredients and find out if seasonal or local produce is available. Request this and allow it to guide the menu.

Request waste free packaging, such as reusable trays and displays.



Green Tip # 12.

Reduce Your Events Energy Usage

Host events during the day to take advantage of natural light and save electricity.

Host events outside to save energy for heating or cooling.

Be sure to let your guests know if the event is outdoors so they can dress appropriately. Support green energy and reduce your impact by using [Bullfrog Power](#).

Still Looking for More?

Find other Event Greening tips [here](#).

Learn more about zero waste living [here](#).

Give back and [make a donation](#) or [volunteer with us](#).

Sign up for our [Eco News](#) to learn more about green living, local events and more!

Addendum

Phrasing for Sharing Your Green Vision

Sharing your "green vision" is an important step in getting your guests on board. Use the below phrasing suggestions to offer guidance to your guests on how to prepare, participate and actively engage with your green event. Pick and choose the options most relevant to your event.

[I am/We are] excited to let you know the [type of event; birthday, holiday, etc.] on [date/time] is going to be an eco-friendly event! [I/We] would really appreciate your assistance and cooperation in making it as green as possible.

There is also going to be a friendly competition on who can be the “greenest guest”, don't worry, it will be fun!

So, what can you do to help with this?

[I/We] kindly ask you to bring any contributions in reusable containers and leave all single-use plastics at home.

The [event; birthday, holiday, etc.] will be outside, so please keep this in mind as you prepare for the day and dress accordingly.

Eating local, organic, seasonal and meat-less has the lowest carbon footprint. Keep this in mind when preparing your dish for the potluck. Bonus points if your dish is all four!

If you are able to bike, walk, carpool or take public transit, that is even better!

[I/We] have a special prize for the “greenest guest”.

Let [me/us] know if you have any questions or if you need some guidance on any green alternatives.

Phrasing for Your Invitations

Explaining the event style in your invitations will help guide your guests for the day.

Use the below phrasing to offer guidance and set expectations for your guests.

Pick and choose which phrases work best for your special event.

The [event/celebration] at [my/our] house is eco-friendly this year! What does this mean? [I/We] are aiming for it to be fully waste-free and low impact.

The [event/celebration] is waste-free, low impact and eco-friendly. Please leave your single-use plastics, packaging and wrapping paper at home this year.

The [event/celebration] is going green!

We love the earth, so keep it clean
to help, [our/the] party is going green!

Please keep the environment in mind as you make decisions about what food to bring, how to get to [my/our] house and how to bring gifts.

The [event/celebration] is outside, so please dress according to weather.

Please ensure your [contributions, food, dishes, etc.] is waste-free and in reusable containers.

Special Requests Regarding Gift Giving:

Request for No Gifts:

- No gifts please
- Your presence is your present
- No presents please, just your presence

Request for Donations:

- In lieu of gifts, donations can be made to [insert organization]
- In lieu of gifts, please bring a [canned good, unwrapped book, etc.] for donation to [insert organization]

Helpful Resources

Please note, BurlingtonGreen has not vetted and does not endorse any of the following businesses.

Waste Diversion

Sorting Waste: [Halton Region Waste Resources](#)

Compostable Dishware: [Greenmunch](#)

Zero Waste Products: [The Kind Matter Co.](#)

Learn More: [The Harm of Plastic Bottles](#)

Eating Local:

[Burlington Centre Lion's Farmers Market](#)

[Centro Garden Farmers Market](#)

Learn More: Calculate [Food Miles](#) and the [importance of eating organic](#).

Local Farm Delivery Services:

[Plan B Organics](#)

[Mama Earth Organics](#)

Refill Centres:

[Park Market & Refillery](#)

[Refillery Market](#)

[Bulk Barn](#)

Eating Meatless:

Learn More: [Reducing Meat Consumption and the Environment](#)

Vegetarian Recipes; [101 Cookbooks](#), [Cookie + Kate](#), [With Food + Love](#)

Vegan Recipes; [Oh She Glows](#), [Sweet Potato Soul](#), [The Full Helping](#)

Green Transit:

[Burlington Transit Trip Planning](#)

[Go Transit Trip Planning](#)

[FaceDrive](#)