



LWVMA Guidelines for Sustainable Practices

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts believes that organizations should take measures that taken collectively will have a big impact on reducing our carbon footprint. The LWVMA has examined our practices as an organization and has developed guidelines that will help transition us away from fossil fuels and toxic chemicals. Organizations, large and small, have an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute to a healthier, more sustainable future.

Members of the Environmental Action and Advocacy Committee are available to act as consultants to Leagues who are organizing events and who may want assistance and guidance on sustainability practices.

For events, we recommend that Leagues focus on three or four practices to help organizers focus on what is best to do for that event and avoid "green fatigue."

Printed materials

- Print only on 100% recycled paper.
- Use a recycled paper logo and/or "printed on 100% recycled paper" on printed material. This notation helps educate others about such practices.
- Print double-sided as much as possible.
- Use draft mode on internal and draft documents to save ink and energy.
- Be realistic when deciding the number of programs and other handouts to print. Under-estimate rather than over-estimate.
- Include text in email signatures suggesting that the email not be printed. For example: "Please consider the environment before printing this email." or "Save paper. Don't print."

Events open to the public

- Identify all LWVMA events as "zero waste" or "low waste."
- Encourage carpooling, walking or biking to meetings or events.
- No bottled water. Bring mugs or glasses to fill with water for the speakers.
- Provide a "please recycle paper" container for participants to leave programs and other paper materials at the end of the event.
- Consider "greening" events with Green Energy Consumers Alliance, <https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/collaborate#event>
- Avoid serving food unless it is integral to the event.
- Minimize artificial lighting.
 - Keep lights dim (or off) when using a projector.
 - Open shades instead when not using a projector.
- Minimize heating and cooling as venue permits.

Events open to the public with food: Plan to have a low-waste event (or zero-waste)

- **Use food service waste reduction hierarchy:**

- Reusable plates, cups and utensils. Collect, wash, and reuse
- Recyclable products
- Home compostable products (check label)
- Products made from recycled materials
- Use cloth (or reusable plastic) rather than disposable plastic or paper table covers.
- Serve tap water in pitchers; no bottled water.
- Serve foods that do not require utensils or plates.
- Coffee and tea service should be limited to early morning events.
- The following should **not** be out on the table at LWV events: plastic tablecloths, bottled water, plastic straws, coffee stirrers, small plastic creamers. Bring cream in larger container and provide stirring spoons. Provide mugs and encourage participants to bring their own mugs. Hot drink cups can be provided as a backup.

LWV potlucks, catered events, restaurant events

- Make the event low or zero waste. Work with caterer or restaurant to discourage use of disposable materials and encourage reusable materials.