

Sustainable!

ST. CLOUD AREA

JOINT PLANNING DISTRICT

Green Meetings and Conferences

Planning a meeting or event can be not only challenging but wasteful. Huge stacks of paper printed on one side and handed out to each individual only to be thrown away after the meeting. Look for ways to show your commitment to a better way of doing business through "green practices". There are affordable options for green efforts in your face-to-face meetings with customers and employees. The only requirement is some new thinking.

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED
PURCHASING**

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
GREENHOUSE GAS
REDUCTIONS**

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

DID YOU KNOW?

Worldwide air travel (including more than 80 million business travelers who "meet and greet" at conferences and trade shows every year) accounts for about 7 percent of total carbon emissions.

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

Technology has made going green at meetings and conferences much easier. Decide if you need to have a face-to-face meeting or if the information could be delivered via video-conferencing. Or replace a conference session with a webinar. The reduction in carbon emissions alone from not having to travel will be a great start to going green. Every little bit helps!

ANNOUNCE IT!

Make a friendly announcement at the start of the meeting or conference of the efforts to go green during the event. Provide attendees with information and instructions on the going green initiatives and opportunities available, such as location of recycling containers, reusable mugs are not gifts, etc., and encourage their participation.

TIPS FOR GREENING YOUR MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES:

Before the event:

- Consider the site for your next meeting or conference. Choose locations with walkable amenities and accessible public transportation opportunities.
- Organize carpools, shuttle buses, or subsidized public transit as options to offer to meeting or conference attendees.
- Send web-based invitations; allow on-line registration or setup a website to distribute information about the event. If you must send out materials, print them on recycled paper.

During the event:

- Make all copies two-sided or make all information available on-line, e-mail or jump drive.
- Use PowerPoint instead of passing out sheets of paper. Do not pass out notes pages; make attendees take their own notes and make the PowerPoint available for download afterward.
- Provide recycling bins for paper, plastics and cans in meeting rooms and common areas.
- Use reusable name tags and ask that they be returned after the event. Or request that attendees wear their own professional work badges.

After the event:

- Provide electronic follow-up opportunities such as on-line surveys or e-mails.
- Make presentations and information available on-line for download.
- Recycle any unused materials or save for the next event.
- Skip the trinkets or distribute recycled or biodegradable items.

EATING GREEN AT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES:

- Serve drinks in pitchers or reusable containers. Skip the paper cups and use reusable cups or mugs with your company logo for additional advertising.
- Plan meals using local, seasonal produce.
- Use china and linens, or biodegradable plates, napkins and cutlery from recycled materials.
- Serve plated entrees, not buffets, to reduce food waste. Provide a separate container for food waste so that it may be composted.
- Offer snacks in bulk and not individually wrapped. Same goes for creamers, sugars, ketchups and mustards; use a refillable dispenser.
- Do not use Styrofoam cups or plates.

