



**Corporate Policy**

## **Environment**

### **Zero Waste Policy**

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Effective: 12/14/09

Reviewed: 2024

Amended by Council on: Apr. 16, 2024

Next Review: 2029

Note:

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The Zero Waste Policy provides guidance on waste reduction and diversion activities indoors and outdoors on City property such as City Hall, arenas, community centres, parks, etc. Although achieving zero waste is an ambitious goal, it is one that we can all aspire to over time.

### **Policy Statement:**

The Zero Waste policy affirms the City of Burlington's commitment to:

- Continuous improvement to ensure operations, programs and events on City property occur in a safe and sustainable manner, minimizing waste and ensuring proper recycling and composting (where feasible and available) to reduce our ecological footprint and reduce costs.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to:

- Waste management operations in City facilities and parks.
- Corporate food services.

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- Public and private meetings and events organized by staff or an external/third party on City property, including catered events.

This policy does not apply to:

- Joint Ventures though they will be encouraged to adopt zero waste practices in their operations.
- Hazardous waste. A reminder that hazardous waste should not be mixed in with the regular waste stream, as this may pose a hazard to the environment and workers. For confirmation, check out the [Put Waste in its Place](#) online tool at [halton.ca/waste](http://halton.ca/waste)

## Objectives:

Procurement:

- To reduce waste, staff should consider issues such as life cycle costs, recycled content, greenwashing, and other related matters.
- Staff should refer to the City's [Procurement By-law](#), Green Procurement Guidelines and [Green Procurement Policy](#) for further assistance.

Food Service

- Avoid single serve and non-compostable items where possible.
- The provision of and/or sale of bottled water is restricted with some exemptions.<sup>1</sup>
- Zero waste, recycling and composting instructions will be visible in the food preparation and service areas.
- All food service items that are deemed to be recyclable and/or compostable MUST be accepted in Halton Region's recycling and/or composting program. Check the [Put Waste in its Place](#) online tool to confirm ([halton.ca/waste](http://halton.ca/waste)). If the facility is serviced by another waste management company, check their requirements for what is deemed recyclable and compostable for each waste stream.

A Zero Waste Guide is available for staff which provides further guidance on waste reduction measures and the City's bottled water restrictions.

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<sup>1</sup> Exemptions include the Beachway food concession, Tyandaga Municipal Golf Course, outdoor events organized by third parties and large indoor events with more than 1,000 participants. Bottled water may be onsite at City events and day camp programs ONLY for emergency purposes and will not be used at any other time.

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## Definitions:

For this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Term	Definition
Ecological footprint	Calculates our impact on our environment: how much we use in relation to the environment's capacity to provide and support our needs.
Greenwashing	Stating something is environmentally friendly when it's not or minimizing the environmental impact.
Wishcycling	Putting items in the recycling or composting bin hoping they can be recycled or composted (when they actually can't).

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## Principles:

The following principles provide guidance to the City's waste management actions:

1. **RETHINK** – Do you need to purchase the product? Is this a one-time need or ongoing use? Can it be borrowed from another department, leased, etc.? Do better options exist?
2. **REDUCE** – It is best to reduce waste at the source. Can the process, equipment, and/or material be redesigned to reduce waste? Is the product overpackaged? Can the packaging be returned for reuse?
3. **REUSE** – Is the product durable? Can it be reused (versus one-time use or disposable items)?
4. **RECYCLE** – Don't be a victim of greenwashing or fall for wishcycling. Do your homework to ensure the product is truly recyclable or compostable, that is, accepted into local recycling or composting programs or taken back by the producer for recycling.

## References:

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## Corporate:

- Corporate Energy and Emissions Management Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Corporate Energy and Sustainable Building Policy
- Climate Lens Policy
- Procurement By-law, Green Procurement Guidelines, Green Procurement Policy
- Green Fleet Strategy
- Hazardous Waste Disposal Standard Operating Procedure
- Zero Waste Standard Operating Guideline

## Provincial:

- Environmental Protection Act
- Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority

## Roles:

### Accountable:

Executive Director Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services is answerable for the timely review, updating and dissemination of this policy.

### Responsible:

All staff and patrons are responsible for following this policy and adhering to the waste management principles noted above. Each department is responsible for implementing proper waste management measures and operations within their activities, facilities and/or parks, and ensuring that the requirements of relevant legislation are met. The Manager of Environmental Sustainability will be responsible for the review and update of this policy as appropriate.