



Coordinating Composting & Zero Waste Events in the Dana Building

Dana now requires composting at all food events held in the building. The material below describes how to incorporate composting into your event and make your event zero waste.

For questions, don't hesitate to email: DanaCompostCrew@umich.edu.

Steps to Making Your Event Zero Waste

1. Reserving a Room
2. Ordering & Receiving Food
3. Ordering Compostable Supplies or Using Reusable Supplies
4. Setting up Waste Station(s) & Organizing Volunteers
5. Post-event Clean-up

1. Reserving a Room

To host an event with food in Dana, you must first reserve a room through the Office of Academic Programs (OAP 1520 Dana) by emailing snre.rooms@umich.edu and cc'ing danacompostcrew@umich.edu. In your email please include:

- Event date and time
- Anticipated number of attendees
- Type of food and drinks that will be served as well as the expected caterer (e.g., breakfast & coffee from Afternoon Delight)
- Type of room you would like to reserve (e.g., conference room for 8 people, large open space such as the Ford Commons, etc.)

2. Ordering & Receiving Food

Food vendors and caterers are critical to your event being zero waste. Planning and coordinating with them in advance helps them provide ONLY compostable materials with your order and minimizes compost contamination.

When speaking with food vendors:

- Clarify that your event needs to be zero waste and there MUST be only compostable supplies (plates, utensils, wrapping, etc.).
- Request compostable plates, utensils, etc. if your event is not able to use reusable-ware.
 - Some caterers already offer this — see appendix for Zero Waste-Friendly Caterer List, local caterers that are familiar with U-M processes and supplies needed for a zero waste event. *You should feel free to amend this list as you learn more about the listed vendors and discover or encourage additional zero waste-friendly vendors.*
- Confirm that all delivered materials are compostable BEFORE the delivery person leaves.

- If you find any non-compostable materials, send them back with the delivery person. For unavoidable contaminants such as cling wrap on large platters, remove them from the guest areas and ensure they are put in the trash.
- Take a few minutes to meet with the event coordinators, servers and/or clean-up crew of your zero waste event. Identify and share with them any unavoidable items that are non-compostable that should be disposed of in the trash (e.g. individual condiment packets, granola wrappers, etc.). *This brief meeting is key to minimizing contamination.*

3. Using Reusable Supplies or Ordering Compostable Supplies

For vendors that don't offer reusable-ware or compostables, you can borrow reusable supplies (block-M plates, serving utensils, etc.) from the OAP office (1520 Dana), contact a campus resource, or procure your own compostables.

- Reusable supplies borrowed from the OAP office should be reserved in advance. Please wash and dry borrowed materials before returning to them.
- Compostables MUST be BPI or ASTM D6400 or D6868 certified compostable. Compostables can be purchased from [BGreen](#) (2111 Packard), where all materials are certified compostable, or some compostables can also be found at Lucky's (1919 S. Industrial) or Whole Foods (3135 Washtenaw or 990 W Eisenhower).
- For student-run events, compostables can also be requested for FREE through the Student Sustainability Initiative (<http://sustainability.umich.edu/ssi/zero-waste>) during the school year.
- For Faculty & Staff events needing compostables, you can reach out to the Office of Campus Sustainability (zerowaste@umich.edu).

4. Setting-up Waste Station(s) & Organizing Volunteers

You or the event staff will be responsible for putting out the waste stations. A station = a group of 3 bins (1-recycling, 1-composting, and 1-trash; See image below).

- Build waste stations
 - Gather a group of three bins from the reserved room or nearby areas - one each for compost (green bag), recycling(blue bag), and trash (white clear bag)
 - Arrange all three bins in together, in a location that makes the most sense for your event. For large events, put out multiple stations.
 - COMPOST - Since composting is not building-wide yet, find any metal bin to temporarily repurpose as the compost bin.
 - Line this bin with a green compost bag, found in the first floor Kitchenette drawer directly under the microwave. Note, these bags have a slight green tinge.
 - Cover bin labels with the magnetic/peel & stick compost signs located near the compost bags in the Kitchenette drawer directly under the microwave.
 - RECYCLE - find a container already marked Recycling and make sure it's lined with a blue bag.

- TRASH - find a container already marked Trash and make sure it's lined with a clear bag.

Example Waste Station:



- Organize event volunteers
 - For events held in Ford or Dow Commons, one volunteer from the event needs to be at each station to help attendees properly sort their waste into the correct bins. **Each bin volunteer must watch this [5 min training video](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5cOrYKLnhqTMFliVDNkaW5nd2s/view) (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5cOrYKLnhqTMFliVDNkaW5nd2s/view>) in advance of the event. Please email danacompostcrew@umich.edu with any questions.**
 - Event coordinators are responsible for ensuring their volunteers are trained and reminding them of any potential contaminants at the event (e.g., condiment packets, non-compostable wrappers, etc.).
- Educate attendees
 - Make an announcement at the beginning of the event to share the news that this event is a Zero Waste Event. Explain how attendees should properly sort their waste or ask “event volunteers” for assistance.

5. Spread the Word about Your Zero Waste Event!

- Take pictures at your event
- Tweet about your event with tags such as #UMichCompost #DanaCompost @PlanetBlue @UM_SSI @SNRE

6. Post-event Clean-up

- It's important to take a few minute to check for contamination so that only compostable materials are in the compost “green” bag.
 - If there is some contamination, do your best to remove non-compostables before depositing the compost bag in the loading dock compost bin. There are gloves in the drawer labeled Compost Supplies in the Dana Kitchenette.

- After checking the compost, take the compost bag out to the compost bin located in the dock area between the Dana building and Randall Laboratory. It is best accessible from the east exit of the building (see map below for bin location).
- If the bag is too contaminated to remove all the non-compostables, place the entire bag in the trash dumpster.
- Once the compost bag has been taken outside to the compost bin, remove temporary labels from the metal bin(s) used as the compost bin(s) for the event waste station(s) and return them to the drawer under the microwave in the Dana Kitchenette.



The compost bin is located in the alley between Dana and the Randall Laboratory (top left), which is accessible from the Church St. exit of Dana. Just go down the alley, you will see the blue compost bin (top right).

Dana Compost Crew

The Dana Compost Crew would like to express our deepest thanks for your support in helping Dana achieve its waste goals!

Appendix: Additional Resources on Composting and Recycling

Catering Companies Known to Provide Compostables

(Link to most up-to-date list: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f7ow0xbgWLFvD7nh-UWgDez4sdkhkwPn6yWx19b7a8M/edit#gid=0>)

Caterer	Compost-Friendly?	Notes
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Glasshouse	Upon request	They've told me (Dana's Facility Manager) that they could make sure all SNRE events have compostables; Upon Request; often free
Jerusalem Garden	Yes!	Non-compostables typically provided: black plastic silverware and clear plastic silverware bags) Extra charge for compostable place settings
Katherine's Catering	Upon request	
UM Catering	Upon request	Can upgrade to bamboo compostables for extra fee
Zingerman's	Upon request	
Prime Ovation	Upon request	
Moveable Feast	Upon request	
Angell Food Catering	Upon request	
Paesanos	Upon request	
Afternoon Delight	Upon request	
Picasso Cafe NCRC	Upon request (must request, not standard)	
Bearclaw	yes!	
Shimmy Shack	Upon request	
Whole Foods	Upon Request	
Hillel	Upon request	

Compost Guide

Acceptable compostable materials

- Plate scrapings (including meat and bones), fruits, vegetables and other food waste*
- Bamboo dinnerware*
- Grass clippings*
- Properly-contained leaves
- Garden prunings, crab apples, garden surplus, etc.

- Brush
- Weeds
- Halloween pumpkins
- BPI certified compostable bags

Unacceptable materials for the compost program.

- Muffin liners
- Saran wrap
- Plastic stirrers
- Supplies not marked compostable
- Trash
- Dirt
- Sawdust
- Rocks, stones or gravel
- Branches over 6 inches in diameter or over 4 feet in length
- Painted wood
- Treated lumber
- Plastic bags or containers
- Kitty litter or dog waste
- Diapers

Recycle Guide

Yes:

- Mixed paper – newspapers, magazines, catalogs, junk mail, office paper, cardboard (including pizza boxes, minus the pizza), frozen food and cereal-type boxes, milk cartons, juice boxes, shredded paper (placed in a clear plastic bag).
- Metal cans, lids, glass bottles and jars (please take glass to basement of Dana)
- Rinsed plastic bottles, containers and tubs labeled 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- "Aseptic" and "Tetrapak" packages. These are typically containers/boxes that are used for juice, soymilk, chicken broth, almond milk, etc.

No:

- Plastic bags, Styrofoam
- #3/PVC plastic
- Biodegradable plastics (marked "PLA" or "BPI")
- [Batteries](#)
- Light bulbs
- [Toxic materials such as motor oil](#)
- Medical waste and syringes
- Hardcover books
- Ceramics or Pyrex dishes
- [Electronics](#)
- Trash

- Textiles
- Wood or construction debris

Have additional questions?

- Dana composting questions, email danacompostcrew@umich.edu.
- UM Recycling questions, email recycle@umich.edu.