

REUSABLE OPTIONS AT EVENTS

Reusable products are the best option for reducing waste at events. With support from food and beverage vendors, smaller events can avoid single-use packaging entirely. Reusables reduce:

- Amount of waste and litter
- Your waste removal costs
- Reduces vendor packaging costs
- Event attendees love taking part in reusable events

In this guide:

- Wash Against Waste Trailer
- Setting up your own wash station
- Reusable serveware
- Bond systems
- Bring your own
- Case studies

Nelson's own mobile Wash Against Waste station

Waste No More's Wash Against Waste trailer was launched in 2019 with support from Nelson City Council. This mobile wash station makes it easy for events to adopt a true Zero Waste approach.

- The Wash Against Waste trailer comes fully equipped with an industrial dishwasher and food serveware
- An event just needs to provide power and a supply of fresh water via a hose
- The grey water is stored in an onboard tank which allows up to 80 wash cycles
- The wash cycles take 2 minutes so you get a fast turnover of reusable food serveware
- The trailer has been used to service entire events of around 2000 people
- The trailer also supplies hot water for the pre-washing

You can either use your own or the trailers food serveware, or suppliers are available.

A bond system may be used depending on the location and food serveware used.

To check availability and get a quote for using the trailer, which comes with trained personnel, contact.wastenomore@gmail.com



Setting up your own wash station

Using reusables at events means supplying food and beverage vendors with reusable crockery, cutlery and glassware which are washed and recirculated, just like at home.

Washing up can take place on-site or after the event and is sometimes undertaken by volunteers or a fundraising group.

DIY Washing System

A DIY washing system is ideal for a small event of up to 1,500 people.

What you'll need:

- Crockery, cutlery, cups (see list of where to source at the end of this guide)
- Three large tubs or buckets, scrubbers, dish liquid, gloves, apron & thermometer
- Sturdy long table
- Access to fresh potable water & hot water access
- Waste water outlet (e.g. sewer connected to water treatment facility or other grey water drain)
- Signage
- Staff to wash dishes and re-circulate to vendors (or to wash up after the event).

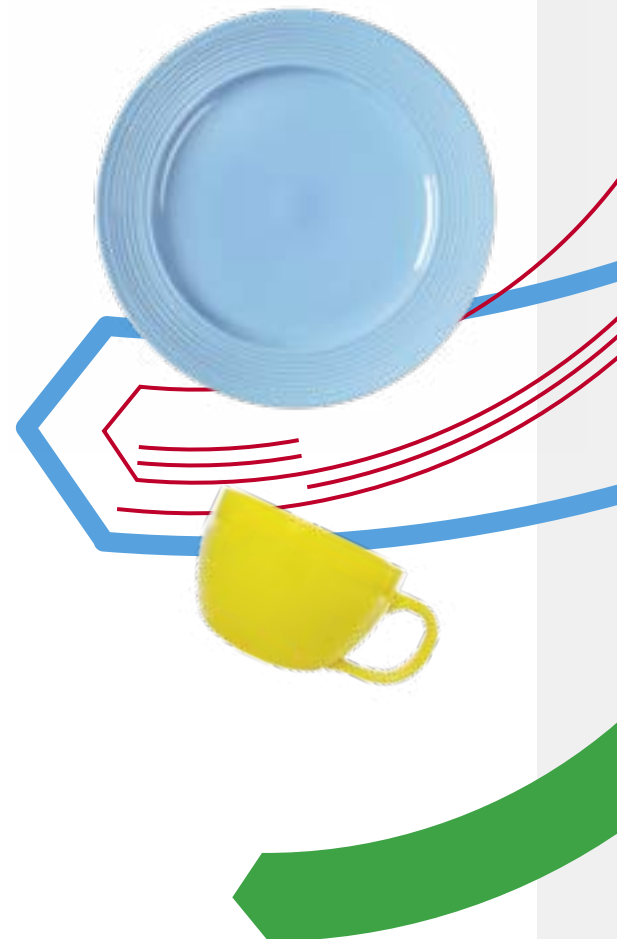
How it works:

Pre-event

- Seek the support of your food vendors well ahead of your event; assure them that the crockery will be tidy and clean (sanitized). They may wish to bring a back-up supply of packaging in case the crockery etc. runs out.
- Source a supply of crockery, cutlery and other items listed above.

At event

- Vendors are supplied with crockery, cups and cutlery to serve their food and beverage on/in.
- Event attendees deliver their used crockery to the washing station or drop off points where it is washed and sterilised by a team of volunteers/staff
- Crockery is recirculated to vendors (make sure you have staff or volunteers available to collect and distribute.



Tip!

Opportunity ('Op') Shops are a great source of affordable crockery, cutlery and glassware. You could build up a kit of items that could be shared with other events.

Guidelines for DIY Wash Systems at events

System 1

Method for cleaning and sanitising with one sink and a dishwasher/sanitiser.

Step 1: Preparation and rinse

- Remove loose dirt and food particles
- Rinse with warm potable water

Step 2: Cleaning

- Wash in hot water and detergent
- Rinse with clean potable water
- Refresh water as required

Step 3: Sanitising

(bacteria-killing stage)

- Use dishwasher or steriliser (domestic dishwashers may be used on a sanitation/hygienic cycle). Follow manufacturer's instructions

Step 4: Air-dry

Check out thrive.sustainable-event-alliance.org/global-reusables-at-events-hygiene-standard/rh-declaration/ for their comprehensive guide.

This infographic provides a summary of the Two Sink Method. Method for cleaning and sanitising with one sink and a dishwasher/sanitiser method for cleaning and sanitising with two sinks.

System 2

Method for cleaning and sanitising with two sinks plus rinse buckets.

Step 1: Preparation and rinse

- Remove loose dirt and food particles
- Rinse with warm potable water

Step 2: Cleaning in Sink One

- Wash in hot water and detergent (above 54 degrees)
- Rinse with clean potable water
- Refresh water as required

Step 3: Sanitising

(bacteria-killing stage) in Sink Two

- Soak items in hot water (minimum 77°C) for at least 30 seconds, or
- Use a chemical food grade sanitiser such as bleach. Use as per manufacturer's instructions.
- Rinse as per manufacturer's instructions (if applicable).
- Refresh water as required

Step 4: Air-dry

NB: The water temperature in Sink Two needs to be monitored by a thermometer to confirm it remains hot enough to be effective.

Tip!

If you are short on time to air dry, hand drying with a paper towel is an option.

Cleaning and sanitising with two sinks *Follow these steps and refresh water as needed.*



PREPARATION & RINSE

Remove loose dirt and food particles

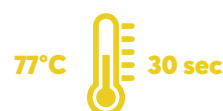
Rinse with warm potable water



CLEAN IN SINK ONE

Wash in hot water (60°C) and detergent

Rinse with clean potable water



SOAK OR SANITISE IN SINK TWO

Soak items in hot water (min. 77°C) for at least 30 seconds, or

Sanitise with chemical food-grade sanitiser



AIR DRY



Where to get your reusable food serveware from

Local reusables food serveware sources

Incorporating a reusable system into your event comes with great benefits. Those that have used these systems report positive customer experiences and even sometimes an income stream.

- Waste No More offers a collection of reusable food serveware like plates, bowls, cutlery and different cups.
- partydepot.nz Partydepot offers a selection of hire items including plates, glassware, cutlery, crockery, catering equipment.
- Covered Hire gotitcovered.co.nz and Continental Hire continental.co.nz/#continental-home offer a variety of dinnerware and glassware.
- Nelson Venues nelsonvenues.co.nz offers 560 Globelets (425ml size) which can be hired at \$0.50 (incl GST) per cup.
- Community centers and church groups often have a good stock of food serveware that could be borrowed or hired.
- Op shops have good stock and may loan or give you a good deal. nelson.govt.nz/assets/Environment/Downloads/Waste/Op-Shop-Brochure-Update_Jun20.pdf



Reusables at larger events

There are currently two providers servicing small to large events nationally who you can contract to manage a reusable system at your event - Globelet and Bettercup.

These companies' services include the provision of on-site or off-site washing systems depending on the number of items you wish to circulate on-site.

They offer a range of reusable items which are hireable, or purchasable, including cups (beer & wine), plates, drink bottles and water fill stations.

How this works at a large event:

- event organisers rent cups or purchase/create custom-branded cups
- at the event, attendees pay a deposit for a cup (typically \$2-\$5) with their first drink. They can exchange it for a clean one, keep using the same cup throughout their time at the event or return it for a refund
- during or after the event, cups are washed and recirculated. For a large event with bars it's a great way to decrease your waste.

Cup hire or custom-branded cup purchase are both available and viable options. Some events run refund systems, some do not and thus create a revenue stream.



Incorporating 'Bring Your Own' reusables

There's a growing movement of people who carry reusable bags, cups, drink bottles and other items with them to avoid single-use packaging. You can support this movement and encourage your vendors to embrace reusables by introducing some of the following initiatives.

Incentivise reusables

Ask your food vendors to offer a discount on any item served in or on reusables, or to charge more when single-use packaging is required.

Provide a kitchen or wash up area

If you have a kitchen or wash up area on your event site, consider making this available to your event attendees to rinse their reusable cups, plates or cutlery themselves. This may work especially well if your event invites picnickers.

Provide a water refill station

Avoid single use water bottles and encourage the use of drink bottles by offering water refill stations at your event. You could hire a water trailer, borrow or buy a few 40 litre containers or see if there's a tap on your event site that could be used. Make sure to have a big bright sign so event attendees are aware that a water refill station is available.



Reusable bond systems at events

Consumers care much more about things where there is a perceived value. For example, a single-use supermarket bag might be thrown away if it was free, but a reusable bag has a higher perceived value because:

- a) you have paid for it, and
- b) you can tell the material is of higher quality, and
- c) it is obvious it is designed to be reused.

The same can be said for reusables at events: if a drink is served in a throwaway single-use plastic cup, it is likely it will be put into the recycling or the rubbish bin, or sometimes left as litter. A reusable cup which you paid a "bond" for at the point of purchase has more value. Your cup has even more value if you can offer a monetary refund system.

How do bond systems work?

Vendors can be the seller, the refunder and the exchanger. They can also be just the seller if you don't want to offer exchanges/refunds, or if you'd like to offer refunds at a centralised refund point. The easiest way to run a mandatory reusables system is to involve your vendors as the seller.

- If they are the seller, you will ask them to add on a bond price to the sale price and hold the money in trust for you.
- If they are the exchanger, their customer arrives with an item already with a bond on it, which the vendor exchanges for a (clean) replacement and the customer pays only the product sale price (they don't need to pay another bond as it is transferred to the new item).
- If they are the refunder, they would offer a partial or full refund of the bond to the customer using the money they've held in trust for you.

A centralised sale/refund point is a bespoke vendor or separate location which is resourced to sell, exchange and refund bond items. This can seem like it would be easier for your vendors but, depending on the size of your event, you may need to have multiple centralised sale/refund points to service your attendees' needs. You don't want queues of people waiting to buy bonded reusable items instead of spending their money with your vendors. Similarly, you don't want queues of people waiting for refunds at the end of an event.

How to implement reusable bonded systems at your event

First, conduct a quick analysis of everything sold at your event, then think: could I use reusable items in place of some or all of these items? Almost all seemingly single-use products have a reusable alternative – from the humble shopping bag through to stainless steel mugs/cups, and reusable takeaway food containers.

HERE'S HOW:

- Purchase a supply of the new reusable items (you could seek funding to help with this one-off cost).
- Customers are charged a bond on each item which covers the cost. Extra allowance could be made to run the system at a profit.
- Customers are encouraged to bring the item back each time (or they will need to pay the bond again).
- A refund may be offered. This would be at the "cost price" so you can potentially make a profit and run/resource your system sustainably.
- If you are a charitable event you could encourage people to forgo the bond to benefit the event. Or you could nominate and support a charity in that way.

Reusables case studies

1

Wash Against Waste at Opera in the Park Nelson

The Nelson Opera in the Park is a regular event that has had waste minimisation efforts in place for a very long time. It's been declared Zero Waste for the last 10 years.

The crowd of six to eight thousand people are well trained to 'pack-in, pack-out' and the food vendors have so far been serving on compostable food serviceware. In 2000 the Wash Against Waste Trailer run by Waste No More reduced the single-use material by using washable plates for all food vendors. The food service ware was ordinary crockery and used without a bond system. Because of the enclosed location, this worked well.



2

Globelet at Cricket Nelson

Cricket Nelson successfully trialled the Globelet system for the first time in 2018 and diverted 15,000 single-use plastic cups from landfill. A team of volunteers from Waste No More and The Nelson Environment Centre washed and sterilised the cups at the nearby cricket pavilion kitchen after each of the three matches. A bond system was operated and attendees could receive their deposit back. However, Cricket Nelson had to resolve a logistics issue where bar tills needed to close before the game finished, which conflicted with their need to provide refunds for the Globelets. See the full article on Stuff.co.nz.

3

Globelet & Wash Against Waste at Splore

In 2014 Splore festival organisers wanted a reusable product to serve beverages and reinforce their "green" mission. Globelet was an integral part of their multi-faceted approach to waste minimisation which saw them go from a 60% diversion from landfill rate to 92%. The festival hired a Wash Against Waste trailer and worked with volunteers to help wash the cups. Splore have continued to purchase Globelets for their four bars in successive years as reusable cups are now synonymous with their brand.