



CAP TIPs is a series of periodic messages to assist in the planning and implementation of NCVRW Community Awareness Projects. Please feel free to send your individual questions or requests for assistance to Anne Seymour at annesey@atlantech.net

CAP TIP #12

To Improve Public Awareness

Planning and Implementing Eco-Friendly Events

Introduction

“Going **green**” is a great goal for your 2017 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week activities! When you plan and implement eco-friendly events, it can be more cost-effective and enhance your reputation in many communities where being “green” is a collective goal.

This CAP TIP offers guidelines for eco-friendly events, including how to:

- Make a public commitment
- Go digital
- Select an eco-friendly location
- Recycle and compost
- Plan for “green” food, beverages and food recovery

Make a Public Commitment

Announce at the beginning of your NCVRW event that you have committed to being eco-friendly and environmentally-sensitive in your planning, and include any specific guidance for participants (such as pointing out recycling and/or composting bins, asking attendees to recycle their nametags at the registration desk, and/or any food recovery efforts).

You can also create an environmental statement that informs your participants and other stakeholders that you that you intend to sponsor a “green event,” for example:

“(Sponsoring organization[s]) are committed to having an environmentally responsible National Crime Victims’ Rights Week event, and we are working closely with our partners/sponsors/site of the venue to plan and implement an event that reflects green event best practices.”

(Adapted from the ICARUS Foundation)

Go Digital

Using digital communications to publicize your NCVRW events is not only eco-friendly, but also cost-effective and for many people, the preferred mode of communications. Here are some tips to “go digital”:

- Limit your on-site planning meetings and instead use technology applications (such as free basic services such as zoom.us for small video conferences or freeconference.com for teleconferences).
- Promote your NCVRW events on websites, through social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc.), e-mails and mobile apps.
- Send your “Save the Date” announcement via email or on postcards made of recycled paper (that don’t require envelopes).
- Provide an “email tag” to all your NCVRW event partners to place at the bottom of all emails sent until NCVRW, that provides brief information about your CAP-related activities, for example:
 - 2017 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (*title of event*)
 - Day/date/time
 - Location
 - For more information, please visit (*website*) or email (*email address*)
- Create an online portal for event registrations (see the great example from the USDOJ Office for Victims of Crime at <http://www.ncvrw.org/>).
- Instead of handing out paper documents, provide a flash drive that features all informational and educational resources from your event; or a one-page summary of such resources with URLs listed to access them online.

Location of your NCVRW Events

Consider LEED-certified buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) to host your NCVRW events (you can ask the venue manager or check it out online).

Consider event locations that:

- Are accessible by public transportation
- Have bicycle racks for attendees who are cyclists
- Have parking for busses

Showcase public transportation tips in your pre-event outreach and publicity.

For events held in communities that lack public transportation:

- Encourage carpooling! (And you can seek a volunteer who is willing to help organize carpools).
- If there is a group of participants from the same area, considering providing a van or bus to take them to and from your event.

Recycle and Composting

For resources that are necessary to print – such as your event’s program – use only recycled or 100 percent recyclable paper or substrates, and print the document on both sides of the paper.

Avoid Styrofoam at all costs! Most recycling agencies don’t accept it.

Many party supply stores stock items such as tablecloths, paper plates, cups and cutlery that are recyclable – just ask the staff to point out that aisle! You can also enter “recyclable party supplies” into any Internet search engine to identify eco-friendly resources for your event.

Determine if your event site provides composting for leftover food.

Coordinate with the managers of your event site to ensure that there are composting and recycle bins along with trash bins.

Consider decorations that are eco-friendly and develop a plan to reuse them. For example, vases of flowers can be taken to local victim assistance organizations, or centerpiece bowls of fresh fruit can be offered to a food bank.

Ask participants to recycle their plastic name tags at the registration desk when they exit.

Food and Beverages

If you are using a caterer for donated food or beverages during your NCVRW event(s), being “eco-friendly” means asking if they use local and sustainable ingredients, and if their utensils, plates and serving dishes are recyclable. It’s always good when plating – for serving or eating – can be recycled or repurposed.

Avoid providing bottles of water and, instead, consider giving out reusable water bottles with information about your organization and NCVRW imprinted on them. Provide water dispensers (such as pitchers or carafes) throughout your event site.

[Remember, you cannot use U.S. Justice Department funds for food or beverages and must identify that any donated food or beverages were not paid for with Federal funds.]

Food Recovery

The concept of “food recovery/rescue” – donating leftover food to a non-profit organization such as a domestic violence or homeless shelter – is a core tenet of eco-friendly practices. It is also guided by state and local laws and ordinances that define and/or restrict such practices.

You can develop a food recovery plan in advance by coordinating with a domestic violence shelter, homeless shelter or food bank to deliver leftover food.

Before You Leave....

Make certain you leave your event space as clean and green as when you entered!

Make sure all waste is in the appropriate bin (trash, recycle, compost).

Turn off the lights and any electronics on your way out.

Helpful Resources

The following resources were used to develop this CAP TIP:

University of Washington, Guide to Hosting Eco-Friendly Events
<https://www.cte.uw.edu/w/images/f/fe/Sustainability.pdf>

The ICARUS Foundation
Green Festivals and Events Guide
<http://ecoclub.com/library/epapers/15.pdf>

Wikipedia "Food Rescue"
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_rescue

"Why Is It Important to Go Green?"
<https://www.reference.com/science/important-green-135d04498c8bdf9c>

For More Information

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