

LWV-Needham Policy for Sustainable Practices

Approved by LWV-Needham Board of Directors, May 3, 2018

The League of Women Voters of Needham believes that organizations and communities should take measures that taken collectively will have a big impact on reducing our carbon footprint. LWV-Needham has examined our practices as an organization and has developed a policy that will transition us away from fossil fuels and toxic chemicals. Organizations large and small have an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute to a healthier, more sustainable, future.

Printed Materials

- Print only on 100% recycled paper (including Yearbook).
- Use a recycled paper logo and/or "printed on 100% recycled paper" on printed material. This notation helps educate others about such practices.
- Print double sided as much as possible.
- Use draft mode on internal and draft documents to save ink and energy.
- Be realistic when deciding the number of programs and other handouts to print. Under-estimate rather than over-estimate.

Events Open to the Public

- Identify all our events as "zero waste" or "low waste."
- Encourage carpooling, walking or biking to meetings or events.
- No bottled water. Bring mugs or glasses to fill with water for the speakers.
- Be aware of electrical use, turn off projector and lights when the event is over.
- Provide a "please recycle paper" container for participants to leave programs and other paper materials at the end of the event. LWVN will ensure papers are recycled.
- Consider "greening" events with Mass Energy, <https://www.massenergy.org/renewable-energy/greenevent>.
- Avoid serving food unless it is integral to the event.
- Encourage League members and attendees to bring their own nametags.

Events Open to the Public with Food: Plan to have a low-waste event (or even zero-waste)!

- Use cloth rather than plastic or paper table covers.
- Serve tap water in pitchers; no bottled water.
- Serve foods that do not require utensils or plates.
- Coffee and tea service should be limited to early morning events.
- The following should not be out on the table at LWV events: plastic table cloths, bottled water, straws, coffee stirrers, small plastic creamers. Bring cream in larger container and share stirring spoons. Provide mugs and encourage participants to bring their own mugs. Hot drink cups can be provided as a backup.
- **Food service material hierarchy:**
 - Reusable plates, cups and utensils. Collect, wash, and reuse
 - Recyclable products
 - Home compostable products (check label)
 - Products made from recycled materials
- **Collection containers**
 - Container for reuse (reusable items to be washed and reused)
 - Container for composting (food scraps and napkins)
 - Container for recycling (any materials that RTS accepts for recycling)
 - Use clear signage for all containers or bins

For LWV Potlucks (generally not open to the public)

- A LWV potluck involves more food, serving materials, and different types of drinks.
- Encourage the policy, make potlucks low or zero waste.
- Organize a committee of 2-3 to take care of the refuse so the host is not responsible.

Recommended Products (check package, products may change, not endorsing products)**These are only if the event requires non-reusable items**

- Chinet classic white plates (made from recycled paper, compostable in home compost)
- Full Circle Market (Roche Bros) 100% recycled napkins, whitened without chlorine
- Seventh Generation
- For recyclable plastic cold drinks, #1 PET cups (good market for recycling) or #5 PP (some consider to be least likely to leach chemicals). Available at Sudbury Farms.
- Paper plates are usually not recyclable because they are coated with a thin layer of plastic to keep liquids from soaking in. Acceptable options include paper plates that break down in home compost or are made from renewable or recycled materials (Chinet Classic White are compostable and made from recycled paper). Whole Foods has other options. Seventh Generation brand has 100% recycled plates.

Event Kit—No Food

- Sign indicating “Zero Waste” or “Low Waste” event
- Instructions for No Food Event
- Sign for recycle container “Paper Recycling”
- LWV mugs for speakers
- “Greening event” (if applicable)

Event Kit—Serving Food

- Items in “No Food Event” Kit (as listed above)
- Instructions for “Food Event”
- 2 cloth table covers
- 3 plastic pitchers
- 20 mugs for hot and cold drinks
- Re-usable flatware
- Recyclable cups (if needed)
- Napkins made from 100% recyclable material
- Compostable or reusable plates
- Signs (laminated) for composting, reuse, and recycling
- Scotch tape
- Bins, trash bags, other containers

Investing in the future—Purchases to support the policy

- Cloth table covers
- Water pitchers
- Mugs for hot and cold drinks
- Pop-up recycling bins or collapsible trash bag holders