



Dave Somers
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Snohomish County's Zero Waste Initiative Having Big Impact

Evergreen State Fair on Target to Achieve Goal in 2017

Everett, Snohomish County—Snohomish County today announced progress made on their Zero Waste Initiative. With two years left until the goal is met, almost half of the waste generated by the Evergreen State Fair is now being diverted from landfill.

The 2016 Evergreen State Fair is the County's third year of going Zero Waste; an initiative with a goal to divert all Fair-generated waste from the landfill by 2017. With more than 350,000 visitors in twelve days, the Evergreen State Fair is one of the largest County Fairs in the United States to implement such an aggressive Zero Waste program.

"In just two years, we've reduced the amount of Fair waste going to the landfill by almost half," said Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive. "This is tremendous progress, but we've still got more work to do to reach our goal of zero waste by the end of 2017. With the continued support from our community and Fair vendors, I'm confident we will get there. Every organization needs to do its part to ensure we protect our natural resources."

Key changes tied to the Zero Waste Initiative success is the new requirement for all food vendors to use compostable food-service ware. There are also more than 100 Zero Waste stations throughout the Fairgrounds, which include recycling and compost bins alongside garbage. The stations are staffed by local teenagers who help fair-goers sort their waste correctly. A new partnership this year with Washington State University Extension will deploy volunteers from the Sustainable Community Stewards program to help staff more of the Zero Waste stations throughout the twelve day Fair.

"The new compostable food service ware requirement, combined with our staffed Zero Waste stations, are critical to our success," says Lisa Dulude, Energy and Sustainability Manager. "Last

year Fairgoers recycled and composted 53 tons of material, diverting about 45% of total Fair waste from going to the landfill. I'm confident that we can do even better this year."

Not only does the Zero Waste Fair initiative reduce the County's environmental impact, but it also has significant cost savings potential. "We are continuously looking at conservation opportunities at the Fairgrounds which also helps reduce our utility bills," says Hal Gausman, Deputy Parks Director and Evergreen State Fair Manager. "Working towards a Zero Waste Fairgrounds for all of our annual events is part of our larger goal to minimize the environmental impact of events and make the Evergreen State Fairgrounds the greenest in the country."

To learn more about the Zero Waste initiative and all of the other ways that the Evergreen State Fairgrounds is going green, please visit <http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/3027/Zero-Waste-Fairgrounds> or contact Lisa Dulude at lisa.dulude@snoco.org.