



Governor's  
Energy Office



## Guidelines for Greening Events and Meetings

Compiled by the City and County of Denver, the Governor's Energy Office (GEO) and Greenprint Denver, in coordination with the Denver 2008 Host Committee

*“Denver’s commitment to sustainability is embodied in both Greenprint Denver and our efforts to host the greenest national political convention to date. Anyone involved in planning events and meetings can join these efforts by making daily choices that contribute to the vision of a sustainable Denver.”*

*– Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper*

### PREAMBLE

The Democratic National Convention is a “Convention of a Thousand Conventions.” Pre-convention planning, meetings, fundraising and events start the day the location is chosen and continue through to the actual convention itself. Each and every one of these meetings and events has the potential to negatively impact the environment, making them a major source of the Convention’s overall environmental impact. The good news is that every opportunity for environmental impact provides opportunities to enhance awareness about sustainable meeting practices and to reduce the environmental impacts of each meeting.

The responsibility to act on these opportunities lies in the hands of every event and meeting participant, including organizers, attendees, vendors and venue managers. The following information is designed to help your Convention-related gatherings build momentum toward the “greenest convention” goal by minimizing the negative impacts on the environment. Simple actions and thoughtful planning can make the 2008 Democratic National Convention and all of its thousands of components the greenest in history.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SUMMARY: MEETINGS & EVENTS

Generally, the environmental impacts of meetings and events are generated by 1) materials consumed and disposed of before, during, and after the event, and 2) transportation to and from the event location. These potential sources of impact can be significantly curbed with proactive, thoughtful and green-minded planning.

### GREEN PLANNING CHECKLIST

The Green Planning Checklist is divided into four categories: Energy, Waste and Recycling, Food and Water, and Other. **In order to be considered a Green Event, you must incorporate two options from each category into your event planning.**

*Please note: The presence of links to various products and services does not imply any kind of endorsement or verification of claims from the City and County of Denver, the Governor’s*

*Energy Office, Greenprint Denver, or the Denver 2008 Convention Host Committee. Our intention is give you a starting point. We encourage you to shop around.*

## ENERGY

- Select a venue that is accessible by public transportation and/or centrally located.** Please visit [www.rtd-denver.com](http://www.rtd-denver.com) for bus and light rail maps and route information.
- Provide directions to the event using public transportation and/or bicycle routes.** Please visit the RTD Trip Planner at [www.rtd-denver.com](http://www.rtd-denver.com) for bus and light rail directions and/or [www.denvergov.org/Bicycle\\_Program/](http://www.denvergov.org/Bicycle_Program/) for information about bicycle routes.
- Actively promote carpooling, biking, walking, and/or use of public transportation.**
- Offer safe and secure bike parking at your venue to encourage biking.** Consider providing complimentary valet bike parking and gear checks (like coat checks) for an even better experience.
- Use local vendors** to minimize energy output of shipping.

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

- Ensure that the venue uses a waste management service that will recycle and/or compost waste generated from your event or that the venue will allow you to bring in a service that will.** Please visit the Recycling Directory at [www.denvergov.org/DenverRecycles](http://www.denvergov.org/DenverRecycles) for event recycling contacts.
- Provide pre-event information (advertisements, invitations, announcements, etc.) via electronic means and encourage participants to bring electronic copies of materials on their computers, PDAs, etc.**
- Limit handouts and giveaways.** If you decide to use giveaways, choose environmentally friendly products. Check out [www.amazingrecycled.com](http://www.amazingrecycled.com) for ideas.
- If doing giveaways, give **refillable water bottles** and provide “**filling stations**” to eliminate need for plastic water bottles.
- Reduce the amount of paper used;** provide presentations and support information via electronic media or offer to e-mail after the event.
- When paper is necessary, make green choices.** Use paper that meets or exceeds the EPA standards for recycled paper (<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure/products/paper.htm>); print with vegetable-based ink; make double-sided copies; do not use goldenrod or fluorescent-colored paper; and give attendees the option to refuse copies, recycle or return unwanted copies at the end of the event. Visit [www.ecogreenoffice.com](http://www.ecogreenoffice.com) for eco-friendly office products.
- Use flatware, dishes, glasses, and water pitchers that are either reusable (ceramic, glass, silverware, cloth napkins, etc.) or can, and will, be recycled or composted.** Styrofoam and individual water bottles should be avoided. Visit <http://www.ecoproducts.com/index.htm> or <http://www.biodegradablestore.com/>.
- Use reusable and/or recycled/recyclable materials** in booths, displays, and exhibits.
- Avoid single-serving containers** of anything (condiments, sugar, cream, etc.)
- Provide food “buffet-style” instead of using individually packaged “boxed” meals or pre-plated quantities.**
- Provide recycling/composting receptacles** for all waste streams that will be produced throughout the event; ensure that recycling/composting receptacles are located adjacent to, or in place of, trash receptacles and are well marked.

- Consider using “recycling monitors” at trash receptacle stations** to assist participants with placing materials in the correct receptacles.
- Work with the venue and its waste management service to **ensure that all recyclable and compostable materials will be processed appropriately.**
- Encourage participants to take excess food with them (in environmentally preferable packaging) and/or make arrangements to have excess food taken to local food banks or shelters.** Visit the links below for food donation options in the Denver area:
  - [http://www.foodbankrockies.org/donate\\_food.cfm](http://www.foodbankrockies.org/donate_food.cfm)
  - <http://www.hud.gov/local/co/homeless/foodbanks.cfm#Denver>
  - <http://www.9news.com/life/community/co-resources/9ccsfoodbanks.asp>
- Use name badge holders that can be re-used and collect them at the end of the event by providing receptacles at all exits from the event.**

## FOOD AND WATER

- Allow participants to **fill water glasses as desired** instead of pre-filling them.
- Obtain food from locally available sources and choose organic.** Please visit the following websites for local/organic sources.
  - <http://www.redirectguide.com/DENVER/Index.htm>
  - [http://www.localsustainability.net/?page\\_id=3](http://www.localsustainability.net/?page_id=3)
  - [http://www.wildoats.com/u/Community/local\\_partners\\_in\\_Colorado/](http://www.wildoats.com/u/Community/local_partners_in_Colorado/)
  - <http://www.theorganicpages.com/topo/zipsearch.html?busType=Grower/Farmer>
  - <http://www.albertsorganics.com/>
  - [http://www.sustainablecolorado.org/Sustainable\\_Businesses/Agriculture\\_Food/agriculture\\_food.html](http://www.sustainablecolorado.org/Sustainable_Businesses/Agriculture_Food/agriculture_food.html)
  - <http://www.organiccolorado.org/>
  - [www.coloradoagriculture.com](http://www.coloradoagriculture.com)
- Offer a vegetarian option.**
- Use shade grown, organic, fair-trade certified coffee.**
  - <http://www.allegrocoffee.com>
  - <http://www.hain-celestial.com/>
  - <http://www.kaladicoffee.com/>

## OTHER

- Select a venue that will support your green decisions or, even better, will be willing to adopt them as their own policy.** Some venues may have already made a commitment to green operations. Ask if the venue has an environmental policy in place. If they do, ask to see it.
- Write green language into your venue contract.** For sample contract language, please visit the following links:
  - [http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/epstand2.nsf/ef1431c4615697008525676100775eca/d70b0588ca8b661f8525696c0068c310/\\$FILE/conf2.PDF](http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/epstand2.nsf/ef1431c4615697008525676100775eca/d70b0588ca8b661f8525696c0068c310/$FILE/conf2.PDF)
  - <http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/HostsAndPlanners/10EasyTips.htm>
  - <http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/HostsAndPlanners/MeetingVenues.htm>
- **Encourage travelers to measure and offset their carbon emissions by purchasing carbon offsets.** If your venue pays an Xcel Energy electric bill, you can purchase offsets

from Xcel Energy's Windsource program

([http://www.xcelenergy.com/XLWEB/CDA/0,3080,1-1-3\\_39013\\_40273-1540-2\\_171\\_256-0,00.html](http://www.xcelenergy.com/XLWEB/CDA/0,3080,1-1-3_39013_40273-1540-2_171_256-0,00.html)).

- **Calculate the carbon footprint of the event.** Your calculation should include as much as you can anticipate (transport of materials, staff and equipment, electricity used during the event, etc.) For access to an event-wide carbon calculator, visit

*We are currently working with our carbon advisor and the Governor's Energy Office on a special carbon calculator for DNC travelers and all event hosts or planners. This calculator will feature an option for you to make a modest payment to offset your calculated emissions with an investment in a Colorado Carbon Fund. Please check the Green Room of the Host Committee site in mid-March for a link.*

- **Educate participants when possible (pre-event, during event, after event) about measures being taken to make the event green.**

## **HELP US MEASURE OUR GREENING SUCCESS**

In order to put our "measures" where our mouth is, we need your assistance in monitoring the environmental impacts of your event, with particular emphasis on trying to calculate the benefits of the aforementioned suggestions and other environmentally preferable techniques, supplies, and actions.

We are currently developing a green event registration process, so please hold on to your event checklist to record the steps you took. In the meantime, please email the name of you and your organization, a brief description of your event and a summary of your greening efforts to [green@denverconvention2008.com](mailto:green@denverconvention2008.com).

We also invite your suggestions for improvements of this guide - feedback about what we have provided and addition of other resources or links we have not included.