

Green Graduation Parties

Graduation—a time to truly celebrate! If you're hosting a graduation gathering this spring or summer, consider ways you can minimize the trash this bash will create. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind when planning:

- **Distribute invitations electronically to reduce paper waste.** If you prefer paper invitations, purchase invitations made from recycled paper.
- **Look for decorations that can be recycled or reused.** Some decorations, such as paper banners (provided they don't include any glitter, foil or metal pieces), are recyclable. You can also consider sharing or borrowing decorations from a friend that has thrown a similar party.
- **Plan your menu to reduce waste.** Consider finger foods that don't require a lot of serving ware and avoid individually wrapped items or items with excessive packaging.
- **Provide condiments in bulk** instead of individually wrapped servings. For example, provide a sugar bowl instead of individually wrapped packets.
- **Provide reusable plates, cups, silverware and linens.** Go reusable for serving ware to reduce waste. If you do not have enough reusable items, consider renting items or asking to borrow some from a friend.
- **Provide recycling containers** for cans, bottles, and other recyclables that may be produced at your party. Make sure recycling containers are clearly marked and are placed near trash bins to ensure proper use.
- **Put out containers for food waste recycling.** Compost any food waste from your party in your backyard compost bin or your curbside organics cart. If you do not have a bin or curbside pick-up service for organics, consider asking a friend or neighbor with a backyard compost bin if they would be willing to compost food waste from your party. If you think you might have leftover food, contact local shelters or food kitchens to learn about food donation opportunities.

Visit our website, RethinkRecycling.com, to read more no-waste tips, find information on what you can and cannot recycle, read other people's green celebration stories and share your own on our blog!