



**The Green Seal Event Guidelines – A Handbook for  
Sustainable Events**



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### Introduction

Festivals and events necessarily utilize a number of different industries. Throughout its duration, an event will employ the transportation sector, food and catering industries, energy/electricity plants, waste management, hotels, and rental companies, as well as community involvement from employees and volunteers.

The ability to organize an environmentally friendly event creates the opportunity to reduce the impact that the event, as well as the supporting industries, may have on the natural environment. Planning for and adopting even one environmentally responsible practice can help to reduce consumption levels and potentially result in cost savings as well.

### Defining a “Green” Event

Often when people hear the term “green,” they immediately think of carbon offsets and carbon neutrality. A “green event” does not simply refer to “carbon neutrality,” nor does the purchase of offsets suffice for the sustainable options that can be implemented at an event.

A “green event” is much broader than just purchasing carbon offsets. Reducing energy demand and decreasing the amount of waste sent to landfills will have a much greater impact on the environment and surrounding communities. Greening an event requires mindful planning for every aspect of the event. By making responsible decisions at every stage, from transit to catering to light design, the environmental footprint of an event can be considerably reduced.

### Getting Started – Setting Goals

The first step in making any event environmentally sustainable is to set goals and objectives in order to achieve the ideal outcome. This process requires that the decision makers analyze all aspects of an event and decide what changes can be made that would lead to an environmentally satisfactory end result.



**Above:** The EMA Awards after party. A unique, green event.

Some key considerations when setting goals and objectives for an event include:

- What is the most important component of the event to green?  
This question will provide focus during the planning stages of the event by prioritizing your time and resources. It will also help bring related issues into relief. For example, is the priority to have recycling at the event? Is it to use sustainably sourced materials and vendors?
- How much can be budgeted towards environmental initiatives?  
Some practices may result in cost savings. However, other initiatives, such as providing organic food or setting up comprehensive waste management, may have an initial premium. It is helpful to know from the outset whether or not more money can be spent to implement green practices, if necessary.

### Getting Started – Creating an Environmental Action Plan

Once specific goals have been established, a plan must be conceived. This plan will provide the framework by which all involved in the process can work towards the predetermined, common goals. Action plans should be created for the large areas of focus and consumption, such as energy sourcing, materials sourcing, waste management, and transportation. Each action plan should include timetables, sourcing information, and potential alternatives if the original plan faces unforeseen difficulties.

Initially, the inclusion of environmental concerns and initiatives in an event plan may seem odd, but the overall planning process does not change. Instead the scope of the process is simply expanded to account for certain environmental requirements.

### Getting Started – Communicating Objectives

The reasons behind the greening of the event, as well as the steps to be implemented, should be clearly communicated to all involved, especially since some of these policies and practices will be new. Immediately following the creation of the environmental action plan, everyone in the organization should know of the environmental goals and initiatives, the rationale behind such initiatives, and what steps will be taken to achieve these goals.

Be sure to stay consistent in your messaging to all employees and volunteers. The clearer the reasoning behind an objective is conveyed to all involved, the quicker everyone will buy into the program and adopt the goals as their own.

Feel free to inform the attendees, especially if part of the action plan's success relies on their involvement. For instance, if recycling or composting programs are put into place, let the audience know why the programs are there, and why it is important for the audience to participate. If the event or production company has a website, it may be wise to include environmental initiatives on the site in order to increase audience awareness.

### Negotiating Environmental Practices

The next step is negotiating environmental practices. Even though most of these practices have garnered more attention recently, some may be new to venues and/or vendors. Be aware of which practices are easily implemented and are cost saving or cost neutral. Most environmental initiatives carry economic value whether it is through cost savings, public relations, or attracting new and varied audiences.

Even if some requests cannot be met, requesting such changes opens a dialogue among vendors and spreads awareness of green practices. As more requests are made, vendors are more likely to comply and change their own practices.

The crucial component to remember: **ensure that any and all negotiation points are included in the event contracts.** Insist on the inclusion of a clause in the contract that calls for measurable environmental results and potential consequences for non-compliance. Alternatively, offer incentives to those complying with agreed upon environmental practices.

### Measure Results

Request and tabulate metrics for any and all aspects of an event's production. Such information would include the amount of energy consumed, waste produced and diverted from a landfill, amount of food, etc. Tracking both the environmental and economic impact of the event provides the ability to quantify the results achieved. These measured results can be used as a marketing tool or simply as a benchmark against which future events can be compared.

Share this information with all venues, vendors, and sponsors. In doing so, the implementation of environmental practices will hopefully continue to become more mainstream. Your event could ultimately create a lasting environmental legacy within the community.

### Beginning the Process

The key to successfully implementing sustainable initiatives is to begin. Begin anywhere. If this is the first year in which environmental initiatives are to be put in place, choose those which are feasible without an extensive outlay of time and resources and then build from there.

Every individual step forward in the greening process is important. The use of renewable energy reduces the amount of carbon and particulate matter spewed into our air by local electricity generators. Alternative forms of transit for event attendees reduce harmful emission and decrease gasoline consumption as well as traffic congestion. Recycling slows the creation of new landfills and reduces the requisite energy to create new products.

These guidelines encompass a broad scope of subjects to consider when planning an event, some of which may be more relevant than others depending on the event's budget, focus, and goals. However, as the greening initiatives of an event mature and evolve, each section of these guidelines can and should ultimately be included in the planning process.

By choosing to create an environmentally responsible event, the most important decision has already been made. Start your greening process with one section of these guidelines and build on your progress as time and resources allow. The key is simply to begin...

## 2.1 Destination Selection - Venues

The venue plays a significant role in the environmental success of any event. Especially if there is a limited selection of venues to choose from, it is important to incorporate the idea of green practices into your decisions. In discussions with potential venues, express your environmental expectations. Minimum requirements should be included in any proposal. If a venue does not already have environmental policies in place, ask if it is possible to establish them for your event and ask if they will continue using them in the future.



**Above:** The courtyard of the Ebell Club in Los Angeles

### Conduct a Site Inspection

When speaking to or inspecting the venue, investigate to see how waste is managed and what energy or water conservation practices are in place. Let the venue operators know of your environmental policies and goals and ask them to help present an environmentally responsible images to the event audience.

Specific areas to investigate are presented in the subsections below. While this guide hopes to provide a practical process to implementing sustainable initiatives for any event, it is not meant to be an all-inclusive document that must be followed step-by-step. Each venue will have different capabilities and constraints and these subsections should be tailored around each different facility.

### Powering the Event

Key questions to ask about the venue's energy consumption are:

- Who supplies the power to the venue? Do they provide green/renewable energy?
- What is the average total energy consumed during a similar event?
- Does the venue currently have an energy conservation strategy in place to reduce power consumption?

### Powering the Event

- Renewable Energy – Utilities

Over 50 percent of all electricity in the United States is sourced from coal-fired power plants, an especially dirty source of power. As a result, just over 40 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions in the United States are attributed to electricity generation. California is much cleaner than some states in this regard; only 16.6 percent of the state's electricity is sourced from coal. However, another 45 percent of the state's electricity comes from another non-renewable source – natural gas.

Only about 1/10 of California's electricity is sourced from "green power" – electricity supplied from renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, biomass, geothermal or small-scale hydroelectric power. By choosing to purchase "green" or renewable energy, the event and its producers can support increased development and capacity of renewable energy sources, thereby reducing the consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas.

Depending on the utility providing the electricity to the venue, it is possible that a green power program exists. If no green power program is available or if enrollment is prohibitively expensive, a secondary market exists to purchase renewable energy credits (RECs). Electricity on the grid has two components – the electricity itself and the method of generating the power. RECs have been created for power generated from renewable sources, which can be purchased separately from electricity. Therefore, if purchasing green power from the utility is not feasible, you can still support renewable electricity by purchasing RECs.

- Renewable Energy – Generators

If any of the event's energy is to be generated onsite through generators, make an effort to secure generators that can either operate on renewable energy or are powered by alternative fuels such as biodiesel. Biodiesel contains no petroleum, is simple to use and is biodegradable, non-toxic, and essentially free of sulfur and aromatics. Most companies that rent generators have established maximum biodiesel blend limits. Contact your generator provider about what type of biodiesel can run the machine. Speak to the rental company before using any blend of biodiesel.

A new generation of generators have been created that run on solar energy (*right*). The solar panels charge banks of batteries which, in turn, provide auxiliary power. Unlike any other source of auxiliary power, the solar generator is 100 percent emission free.



**Above:** An example of a solar powered generator.



## 2.3 Destination Selection - Venues

### Waste Management at the Venues

Key questions to ask about waste management are:

- Does the venue have a waste management program that includes a recycling program? A composting/organic waste program?
- What is recycled: paper, plastic, aluminum, cardboard, etc.?

#### Recycling Program – Ensuring Success

Waste is the most visible environmental harm created by live events. As long as people are attending, waste will continue to be generated, and no environmental policy can change this inevitability. Steps can be taken to reduce the impact of this waste, however. The use of products made of recyclable or biodegradable materials such as agricultural plastics, when used in concert with an effective recycling program, will considerably reduce the quantity of garbage disposed in landfills.

A proper waste management system looks not only to minimize waste, but to eliminate waste as well. Eliminating materials that generate waste means that no collection need occur. Examples include: requiring vendors to reduce their packaging and shipping materials, ordering materials based upon maximum possible attendance numbers, and providing product in bulk rather than individual packaging.

#### Recycling Program – Volunteers

To ensure success with recycling during the event, especially if materials are to be separated, it is best to use volunteers. At least one group of volunteers should be recruited and trained to monitor and oversee the collection and sorting of recycle bins. Despite the strategic placement of bins, too often waste is not disposed of in the proper receptacle. Volunteers provide a valuable service in sorting and diverting the maximum amount of materials from landfills. If volunteers cannot be procured to assist with the process, a relationship with the venue's support staff must be established in order to better succeed in any waste management program. Be clear with the staff of all expectations and seek their participation and support.

#### Recycling Program – Set Up

Set up of the recycling bins and sorting stations should take place at least one day before the event. Allow for training time with event staff and volunteers and meet with the hauler to confirm that recycled materials will be hauled to the appropriate facility. Ensure that signs indicating recycling bins, as well as the types of waste they hold, are placed on or over the receptacles.

Recycling stations should be highly visible and placed in convenient locations. In a best-case scenario, a recycling bin should be placed next to each trash bin to achieve a 1:1 ratio. The recycling bins should be visually different from other waste receptacles.

#### Composting

Organic, or food waste, in terms of weight, is generally the most substantial source of waste during a live event. Composting food scraps can greatly reduce the refuse collection totals; food generally weighs more than any other waste.

If composting bins are not available in the area, work with local haulers to find alternatives. Such feasible options include the use of local farmers or community gardens that may be willing to haul and/or accept organic waste.

#### Vendors

Let vendors know at the beginning of the planning process about the importance of their participation in any recycling efforts. Provide vendors with a letter outlining your expectation of participation. Obtaining their cooperation and commitment to do their part in the recycling process is extremely helpful.

Assuming vendors are open to the event's goals, provide them with recycling instructions and work to assist them with their needs. It may also be a good idea to recognize those vendors who actively participate in the initiative.



## 2.4 Destination Selection - Venues

### Restrooms

Key questions to ask about venue restrooms are:

- Does the venue currently employ any water conservation practices in the restrooms?
- What types of paper products and cleaning materials are purchased and used? Are they recyclable and/or non-toxic?

#### Water Conservation

Water is quickly becoming the next scarce resource. Water prices are continuing to rise and water conservation will soon become a focal point of environmental sustainability. Venues can employ numerous conservation methods to reduce water consumption in restrooms.

Through any discussions with or during walkthroughs of a venue, determine what, if any, conservation methods are currently being used. Examples include low volume toilets, waterless urinals, motion sensor sinks, and aerated taps. If no conservation methods are currently in place, work with the venue on implementation. Start with cheap and easy solutions, such as aerated taps, and eventually move towards other conservation possibilities.

#### Recycled Paper Products

The purchase and use of proper supplies are critical to reducing the overall consumption of resources in restrooms. Ask venues if any recycled paper products are currently purchased for use in restrooms. If not, persuade venues to look into purchasing recycled products in the future. Using recycled paper tissues and towels help to conserve precious resources and require less energy in their production, which means less carbon emissions.

#### Environmentally Responsible Soaps and Cleaners

Most commercial cleaners and soaps are made of petroleum-based products and contain numerous toxic chemicals that poison watersheds, fisheries, and the environment in general. There is currently a growing market of environmentally conscious soaps and cleaners that are made with plant-based, biodegradable ingredients and clean just as effectively without the toxic effects. Speak to venues and vendors and inquire as to whether or not they supply and/or use non-toxic cleaners and soaps. If not, ask them if it is possible for them to start sourcing these products.

### Venue Lighting

Compact fluorescent lights and LED (light emitting diode) lights are between 65 and 80 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. While the type of lighting used at each venue is ultimately a decision of the venue owners and operators, event producers and planners can reinforce sustainable ideals by suggesting that standard incandescent bulbs be replaced with more efficient options.



## 3.1 Destination Selection – Hotel Accommodations

Should your event necessitate an overnight stay by any guests, the hotel accommodations should be consistent with your environmental action plan. The choice of partner hotels should reflect the environmental mission of the event itself. Many hotels have active environmental initiatives in place, from towel reuse to water saving devices to energy efficient lighting. Whether you are reserving blocks of rooms at partner hotels, or simply recommending responsible accommodations to guests, the environmental policies of a hotel should be taken into consideration.

Below are some high impact environmental practices to look for when booking or recommending accommodations:

### **Purchase of Renewable Energy**

Electrical power is most often obtained through a local utility or electricity provider. As investment in renewable energy becomes more commonplace, it should be increasingly easy to work with hotels that purchase 100% renewable energy. Even if no hotels currently participate in renewable energy programs, simply raising the issue and voicing your concerns provides subtle market pressure.

### **Energy Efficient Lighting**

Standard incandescent bulbs are highly inefficient in terms of the energy expended to provide sufficient lighting. Energy efficient lighting, such as compact fluorescent lights and LED bulbs can reduce a lighting fixture's electricity consumption by at least 60 percent. Ask if hotels provide energy efficient lighting within guest rooms and common areas. If not, request that they provide energy efficient lighting in the future.

### **Linen and Towel Reuse Program**

Under a program of this type, guests are encouraged to decide whether their sheets and towels are changed daily or less frequently during their stay. By opting into this program, guests can reduce the consumption of water and energy that would ordinarily be wasted through daily washing.

### **In-Room and Property Recycling Programs**

Inquire into a hotel's recycling programs. The hotel should offer guests in-room recycling bins. It should also have a recycling program in place for all cardboard, paper, glass, and plastics throughout the facility. If not, request that the hotel implement such a program.

### **In-Room Energy Savings Program**

A hotel's in-room energy savings program should include instructions for all hotel employees to close blinds and/or curtains, minimize heating/air conditioning, and turn off all lights when rooms are unoccupied.

### **Paperless Registration and Communication**

Ask if the hotel has paperless check-in/out and billing procedures to reduce paper consumption.

### **Purchase and Use of Sustainable Products**

Hotels should purchase and use items that are made up of sustainable, recycled/ recyclable and non-toxic products. This includes post-consumer recycled paper, tissues, napkins, etc., as well as non-toxic soaps and cleaners.

Food and beverages are critical components of any live event; they contribute to the audience's enjoyment of an event and reflect on its overall quality. Event producers have the responsibility of choosing catering that will appease large numbers of attendees, keeping in mind budgetary concerns. However, as event-goers become more sophisticated, they are beginning to expect a broader selection of healthier, organic options, bringing the environmental consequences of an event's food choices to light.

The options for food and beverages are limited by a caterer's scope of service, as well as the particular event for which they are chosen. More options are available when selecting the menu for a gala event as opposed to concessionaires. However, environmental concerns can come into play for all food service.

Some considerations to take into account when selecting and/or contracting with food and beverage vendors include:

### Purchase Locally

The transportation of food products and service wares (cups, plates, utensils) to any event adds to its overall environmental impact and carbon footprint. Minimize the miles these goods travel and reduce related transit costs by requesting locally sourced supplies, whenever feasible. In addition, the purchase of locally grown food products supports local communities and offers fresh, seasonal choices without the transportation impact.

### Organically Grown Foods

Organic foods are grown without the use of manufactured fertilizers and other chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides. Organic farms tend to operate on a smaller scale, thereby reducing the use of heavy machinery, as well as limiting externalities such as soil erosion, water consumption, and run-off. When considering organic products, ensure that they are locally grown. Any positive environmental effect could be lost if the organic products must be shipped in from across the country.

Consumption of organic fruits and vegetables has gained popularity in recent years and they are widely considered by the general public as healthy. Organic foods are often sold at a premium, so it is possible that they may be cost-prohibitive.



Above: Monterey Bay Aquarium's sustainable seafood guide - Seafood Watch

### **Choose Seafood from Sustainable Fisheries**

Increased consumer demand for seafood is depleting fish stocks around the world and destroying the health of our oceans. Today, nearly 75 percent of the world's fisheries are over-fished. Take steps to ensure that any seafood served at an event has been harvested in a sustainable fashion, so as not to further exacerbate the problem.

### **Organic Alcohols and Mixers**

Organic alcohols, like organic foods, have recently become popular based on the belief they are healthier and more nutritious. They are still a niche market; however, they are rapidly gaining popularity through product placement at "green" and other celebrity events. Examples of organic alcohols include: Rain Vodka, Chopin Vodka, VeeV, Square One Vodka, 267 Infusions (natural, rather than organic), Juniper Green Gin, Papagayo Spiced Rum, and UK 5 Vodka.

### **Recycle Food Packaging and Other Waste "Behind the Scenes"**

Each venue and vendor should implement or participate in a "behind the scenes" recycling program, which would include recycling paper, glass, plastics, aluminum, corrugated boxes, and kitchen grease. Speak with each party beforehand and make them aware of your environmental requests.

### **Request Minimal Packaging and Bulk Containers**

Where applicable, especially in the case of condiments, individual sized packets should be replaced with bulk containers for attendee use. Additionally, vendors should be requested to minimize all packaging materials of food products.

### **Provide Reusable Beverage Containers to Attendees**

If the event will have any sort of food court or centralized concessions area, offer the audience an eco-incentive to purchase and reuse their cups by charging a one time additional fee and providing refills at a discount. Reusable containers are a wonderful solution to preventing waste while providing individuals with a keepsake from the event. Vendors should also save on overhead by reducing the amount of cups to have in stock.

### **Donate Untouched Food**

Under the Good Samaritan Act (42 U.S.C. 12671-12673), any organization that, in good faith, donates food to a charity is exempt from liability.

Any suitable foods leftover from gala events should be donated to a local food bank or other non-profit for their distribution to the needy. Food donation reduces the amount of waste disposed of during and after the event. When contracting with each venue or vendor, include a clause requiring that all untouched food and beverages are donated. There are a number of organizations that will make arrangements to pick up donations.



**Above:** Jonathan Bennett arrives on the Green Carpet

The event production team plays a significant role in ensuring that sustainable practices are implemented throughout the event. This role includes educating venues, employees, vendors, and any contractors, as well as possibly collecting valuable information about the carbon emissions created over the life of an event.

The production team also has the ability to set an example for all employees and volunteers that are part of an event's successful operation. By inspiring and reminding all involved to implement green actions, these same individuals are more likely to follow through on their green commitments in all aspects of their lives.

On the next pages are general considerations to take into account when planning for any additional production requirements. Some may not be relevant. However, the underlying principles are applicable to almost any portion of an event requiring outside materials, design, or construction.

### Signage, Step & Repeat, Programs/Paper Flyers

Smart production and design of signage and marketing materials are a necessity when greening an event. Signs and marketing materials are, by nature, highly visible and convey as much of a message through what they say as through the materials with which they are made. The sections below outline suggestions for their production and printing.

- Signage, Banners, and Step & Repeat

Any large scale signage and banners should ideally be made from recyclable or biodegradable materials, rather than standard polyvinyl chloride (PVC), an extremely toxic polymer that releases chemical gases into the air. In addition, the PVC production process creates byproducts called dioxins, which are harmful, cancer-causing environmental pollutants.

One alternative to PVC is agricultural plastics, which are generally made of corn. The finished product offers an alternative material to standard plastic that is sturdy, durable, and aesthetically comparable to PVC. After the event, agricultural plastics can be composted rather than thrown away, thereby reducing the amount of waste created.

If no cost effective alternative to PVC is available, then every effort should be made to reuse or recycle the materials. PVC has an extremely long life span; if possible, create PVC banners without specific dates that can be reused year to year. If this is not a desirable option, donate them to local schools, churches, or even artists who can find ways to reuse the materials.

If available, it is preferred that all banners and signs are manufactured in an environment free of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Ask your printer what environmental standards their banners and production practices meet.

- Programs and Paper Flyers

Many events necessarily require the printing of programs and other paper flyers or pamphlets. In an effort to reduce resources consumed and the energy required for their creation, any and all paper used should be printed on recycled paper.

There are two issues with printing on 100% post-consumer, recycled paper: cost and print quality. First, the cost of recycled paper is often higher than standard, virgin paper. Second, depending on how many colors are used, recycled paper sometimes does not hold up well. It is possible that colors will occasionally bleed. If 100% recycled paper is not feasible, use paper with at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.

- Inks

Standard inks contain VOCs, which are extremely toxic to the environment. The best practices is to use bio-based inks (typically soy or other vegetable-based) for printing of all materials. Regardless of the type of materials being printed on, bio-based inks are the most environmentally friendly option.

### Red Carpet/Green Carpet

The use of a “green carpet” has become more and more commonplace at industry events. Gala events such as the Golden Globes, Academy Awards, Emmys, EMA Awards, and other pre- and post-parties have all begun to use carpets made of recycled materials like plastic bottles. A number of companies are manufacturing such carpets and event rental companies are also providing them as an option.

### Stage Design

Most stages either pre-exist within a venue or are rented from a local company that reuses the same stage hundreds of times. Assuming the stage is reused, it is already “sustainable.” However, the transport of the stage to and from the venue and any necessary construction do provide important areas of environmental focus.

Some basic ways to ensure sustainable stage production include:

- For any wood purchases, use Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood. Utilize other sustainable materials such as cork, bamboo, and/or salvaged wood where possible. Avoid tropical hardwoods, such as lauan.
- Avoid toxic materials. PVC should be avoided to the greatest extent possible.
- Use non-toxic, water-based paints, and if adhesives are used, make sure they are low-VOC.
- Design the stage with disassembly in mind to maximize the possibility of reuse or recycling. This includes the use of screws rather than nails.
- Request that delivery trucks observe a strict no-idling policy.

### Set Design

Set design is an extremely important concept of any event, as it sets the tone for the occasion and provides a visually stimulating backdrop for the crowd. A design does not have to sacrifice quality and appearance to be environmentally sustainable.

Strive to include locally sourced goods and materials and incorporate reused or recycled materials wherever feasible. If recycled materials cannot be used, then make every effort to use sustainable materials such as bamboo, non-PVC materials, natural textiles, and/or reclaimed materials.

Use water-based, instead of solvent-based paints to minimize toxic emissions. Water soluble latex paints typically contain fewer VOCs, generate fewer odors, and eliminate the need to use paint thinners to clean surfaces.

Reuse and donate set materials after an event. Ensure that set materials that will not be reused for future events are donated to local charities, where possible. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and local schools/theater programs are often able to employ leftover materials in their projects. Call organizations before the event and determine the level of interest.

### Lighting

One of the focal aspects of a successful event is lighting design. Emphasis should be placed on smart design involving the use of reflectors, reflective materials and background paints, incorporating as much natural light as possible, and using energy efficient bulbs. Be sure to test the light level multiple times in an effort to avoid over-lighting and consuming more energy than necessary.

To get to an event, guests will use those modes of transportation that are convenient, easy, and available to them. At a live event, such as a concert, approximately 90 percent of all emissions are the product of audience travel. This is likely true of other events as well. To limit transportation emissions, efficient modes of transportation should be highlighted and incentives to use such transit should be implemented.

### Mass Transit and Car Rental

Depending on the nature and location of the event, arrivals from out of town could comprise a large share of the attendees. Disseminate information to all guests regarding the availability of mass transit option in the area, as well as environmentally friendly car rental options. If the event accepts sponsors, a partnership with a car rental company offering eco-options is a feasible option that should be explored.

### Talent Transportation

If any special guests are being chauffeured to and from the event, or to any outside activities, every step should be taken to ensure that they arrive in a hybrid or alternative fuel vehicle. This provides further visible evidence of your intention to produce an environmentally sustainable event by reducing transportation emissions. It also allows the event, its producers and the special guests to act as role models for the general public in the environmental cause.

### Parking Incentives

If parking is a priority during the event, work with owners of parking facilities to create incentives for those who carpool, such as decreased parking rates or prime parking spots. If arrangements are made, be sure to advertise on the website. Such incentives will be recognized and used.



**Above:** A Toyota Plug-in Hybrid at the 2008 EMA Awards



## 7.1 Communications and Marketing

Communicating an event's environmental commitment, as well as the actions taken and their corresponding results, builds recognition of your greening efforts and publicly pledges support to the environmental cause. Working to involve and inspire event guests, and the public in general, extends the recognition and missions beyond just a single event. To achieve the greatest success and value from an event's environmental initiatives, it is increasingly important to engage the attendees, surrounding communities, governments, agencies, and local non-profit groups.

Below are some initial suggestions for communicating and marketing an event's environmental plan:

### Pre Event

- Make an effort to sell tickets online and in paperless form
- Provide information about public transportation on your website and all other relevant forms of communication. Encourage public transit and carpooling by the attendees.
- Speak out about the environmental initiatives being employed for the event. Explain what the goals of the event are and how audience participation can help achieve these goals.
- Seek out sponsors who share in a common environmental mission, and seek "green sponsors" to help offset any additional costs arising as a result of environmental initiatives

### During Event

- Strive to incorporate educational or environmental messaging within the context of the event. Often, the more subtle the method of communication, the more effective.
- Highlight specific initiatives and practices that have been incorporated into the event.

### Post Event

- Metrics are critical for gauging success and benchmarking progress versus others in the industry. Quantification of these metrics provides opportunity for press releases and collecting lessons learned from any ongoing environmental initiatives.
- Publicize your environmental success to guests and the public at large. Send environmental results – and the important role each individual contributed – to vendors and other participants via email. This helps to further education about the event's environmental initiatives and generates recognition of positive results.
- Publish a final report detailing the initiatives, successes and failures of the event and make it publicly available. Give an honest critique of your results.



## 8.1 Green Seal Event Checklist

### General

- Implemented an event-wide environmental statement and mission
- Offered incentives to staff and crew who join the environmental task force
- Created an environmental action plan for at least one portion of the event
- Negotiated environmental practices with 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors and contractors including waste minimization, participation in recycling, and strict no-idling policy
- Requested that metrics be provided for all facets of event including waste created and energy consumed
- Completed a carbon assessment / footprint

### Event Venue

- Conducted a site inspection and asked questions regarding sustainability
- Venue has energy efficiency policy such as motion sensors, efficient lighting, water saving programs
- Implemented a comprehensive recycling program at venue for duration of event
- Enlisted volunteers or staff to aid in carrying out recycling program
- Set up a composting/organic waste disposal unit for the event
- Asked venue of possibility of incorporating sustainable products and energy/water saving principles for event
- Auxiliary power provided by biodiesel powered generators
- Auxiliary power provided by solar powered generators

### Accommodations

- All hotel bookings are in a hotel with clearly stated environmental program
- Hotel purchases renewable energy
- Hotel has energy efficient lighting in common areas and guest rooms
- Hotel has in-room recycling programs
- Hotel uses paperless registration and check-out
- If hotel does not do the above, request made to do so for event guests

### Food & Catering

- Food served at event is locally sourced
- Food served at event is organically grown
- If seafood is served, it is sustainably harvested
- Requests made of caterers to minimize waste and take part in recycling program
- Food and beverage served in reusable service wares
- Replaced bottled water is jug/pitcher service
- Any disposable goods used are made of recycled content
- Suitable foods were donated to local charities and/or food banks

### Production Practices

- Any Step & Repeat used either made of non-PVC material or to be reused at another event
- Red carpet made of recycled materials
- Rented props, decorations, furniture rather than purchasing outright
- All programs printed on 100% post-consumer recycled content paper
- All programs printed on at least 30% post-consumer recycled content paper
- Any stage was either rented or came with rental of venue
- Set design includes sustainable materials, recycled or salvaged materials

### Transportation

- Highlight mass transit options for guest arrival on website or event materials
- Highlight eco-friendly car rentals/car services for event arrival
- Provide hybrid or alternative fuel car service for VIP arrivals
- Provide parking incentives for guests who carpool and highlight such incentives on website or event materials

### Office Operations

- All paper used 100% post-consumer content recycled paper
- All paper used at least 30% post-consumer content recycled paper
- Office uses green cleaning products
- Office has comprehensive recycling program in place
- Office has energy efficient programs in place