

## “Greener” Meetings: Basic Principles

“Going green” is easier today than ever before. Many meeting venues – from schools to hotels – already have their own green initiatives. Most Americans are more environmentally conscious and many are completely plugged into electronic (paperless) communication channels. By following a few basic principles, you can plan events that are greener, cleaner, and maybe even leaner for your budget!

- **Aim for green progress rather than environmental perfection.** Very few meetings have zero environmental impact. Rather than wasting time trying to do everything perfectly, just take every opportunity to consider the environment when you can.
- **Think about going green in the planning stage.** The more lead time you have to consider environmentally sensitive strategies the better. Start thinking green from the very first moment that you begin the process of planning any event.
- **Create a “Green Team” for planning and monitoring.** Meetings and conferences are often organized by a planning committee or by an event planner. Either way, make certain that yours is on the green bandwagon before, during, and after the event.
- **Get green help from the facility or city where your event is held.** Environmental sensitivity is good business, so many conference centers, colleges, and other event venues are already going green. Some cities also offer local green tips online.
- **Go green with food.** Foods and beverages served at meals and breaks provide additional opportunities to showcase a commitment to sustainable practices. Serve – and identify – locally grown and produced items, whenever possible.
- **Communicate your green commitment.** Let everyone know from the beginning that you are planning a meeting with the environment in mind. Include a statement about green strategies on your invitations, program, materials, and event signage.

## “Greener” Meetings: Basic Principles, *continued*

### More Resources

If you need more ideas for planning greener meetings, classes and conferences, visit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings/>. In addition to the links on the EPA site, you may also want to search on green meetings plus the city where your event will be held to find links like this one for the City of Chicago:

[http://www.choosechicago.com/meetingplanners\\_/Pages/green\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.choosechicago.com/meetingplanners_/Pages/green_meetings.aspx)

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