

CVSWMD WASTE WARRIORS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Waste Warriors is a program borrowed from Chittenden Solid Waste District to help special events imagine and achieve better waste diversion outcomes. The primary goal of the waste warriors program is to interact with the public and help event attendees sort their discarded materials correctly. By teaching event attendees about recycling and composting, Waste Warriors are doing far more than just reducing contamination of the recycling and compost bins at the event – we’re also fostering behavior changes at scores of homes and offices throughout Central Vermont district and beyond.

Basic expectations:

- Check in at the designated time/place for orientation
 - understand the event’s overall waste management plan
 - learn about the specific products being used at the event and where they belong
- Monitor (generally standing) a waste station
 - politely teach event attendees where the items they’re discarding belong – and why
 - answer attendees’ general questions about waste sorting
 - maintain a friendly, positive approach and attitude
 - retrieve misplaced items using a litter picker – when not engaged with attendees
- Return equipment to the designated contact at the end of your shift
- Give 48 hours’ notice if you cannot attend the event (or notify the designated event contact in case of a last minute emergency)

Comfort/safety:

- Wear clothing appropriate to the venue/setting – layers are encouraged for outdoor events
- Never reach into collection containers with your hands.
 - In general, let people sort their own trash – direct but don’t touch.
 - Use litter pickers to retrieve items that went into the wrong bin – or let it go.
 - Wear gloves and wash hands if you do handle any waste.
- Be aware that wasps and insects are often attracted to compost, recycling, and trash bins. If you are allergic to bees, you should not monitor the bins.
- Avoid conflicts. Direct people where to put things, but if they are combative, intoxicated, etc. let it go.

Tips on how to interact with event attendees:

- Have fun! It’s contagious.
- Be friendly, helpful, enthusiastic, and cheerful.
- Smile and make eye contact.
- Greet those who come to sort their waste with a quick intro – “Hi, I’m a Waste Warrior and I’m here to help get the items into the right bins.”
- Use positive language such as “That goes here” and “Nice job!” Try to AVOID saying “no” or “don’t.” For example, say, “Thanks for sorting. That actually goes in the recycling bin.” (and point to correct bin).
- Thank people for taking the time to sort their waste
- Depending on the time frame/ audience, you can quickly direct them on what goes where, have them guess which things go where, or encourage them to ask questions (while still stepping in to avoid contamination).

