



Greening Festivals

What is the issue?

Festivals of all kinds are important to the economy as they bring thousands of visitors who contribute to the local economy and community. Socially and environmentally, however, events and festivals can be a burden on local communities if they are not managed with a sustainability mindset. Some festival and event organizers are beginning to green their events to minimize their impact to the environment, however it is not common place and there is no one place to find out such information.

What did the researcher do?

The researchers sought to determine the need for greener festivals as well as impacts and global best practices to help make festivals and events more sustainable. The researchers did an extensive literature review and then created an on-line guide for greening festivals. The Guide was then piloted on two festivals – one large and one small to determine usefulness of the guide. After the pilot, festivals across the Lake Simcoe Watershed were contacted and asked for their feedback. Overall, 22 festivals were contacted directly and over 100 global festivals reviewed to determine global best practice.

Why is this research Useful?

There is an opportunity for every single festival and event to make a positive difference and to set an example of how other events and individuals can be more sustainable. The event industry impacts millions of people who attend festivals each year. This creates a responsibility for festivals to make sure they are working towards sustainability to not only lessen the impacts of their event, but to use the festival as a platform to encourage greener behaviour long after the festival ends.

What were the outcomes?

After the research was conducted, it was found that there were 11 main categories that festivals needed information on. They include:

- Camping
- Community
- Communication
- Energy
- Employee and volunteer engagement
- Food & beverage
- Procurement
- Transportation
- Venue
- Waste
- Water

It was also found that most festivals were willing to engage in greening efforts but were unsure how to begin.

About the Researcher

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<http://greenfestivals.ca>

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