

WASTE REDUCTION, REUSE AND RECYCLING DURING COVID-19

Restaurant Guide



As your business reopens, the health of your employees and customers, the economic impacts, and the environmental impacts are all more important than ever. Following the new Phase 1 and Phase 2 guidelines and beyond does not mean you have to abandon your environmental sustainability initiatives. Minimizing waste and reducing other environmental impacts can also save you money during this time. By continuing to follow the “3 Rs” of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle while being Responsible, we can all work to stay in business together for the long term.

Reduce

- **MENUS** - Limit the use of printed menus, both disposable and reusable. Instead, use chalkboards, grease boards, flat screens, and mobile-friendly websites - put your menu online! Not only will you save money on printed disposable menus and disinfection of reusable menus, you will reduce waste while your menu becomes a powerful marketing tool reaching beyond your doors.
- **SINGLE USE ITEMS** - Limit spending on all the different types of disposables. Consider a multi-item, multi-compartment packaging as opposed to various single item packaging. For take-out, always ask if the customer needs single use items such as disposable utensils. At this time, most people are enjoying their meals at home where they may not need single use tableware or pre-packaged condiments. It's another way to save money on supplies while reducing waste in your customers' trash bins.
- **FOOD ITEMS** - Analyze your menu. Are you preparing foods that go unsold? Can you trim your menu to the most popular and profitable items to reduce food waste and costs? Not only will this save purchasing dollars, it will save on waste hauling bills, employee time for food prep, and keep your customers coming back for their favorite menu items.

Reuse

- **TABLEWARE** - For dine-in, instead of switching to disposable tableware, consider revising your bussing processes. Handle used utensils and tableware minimally by bussing a table just once and using bussing containers with lids. You will save on the added expense of buying disposable tableware, reduce waste, and preserve a bit of the customer experience from pre-COVID days.
- **MENUS** - If you are using printed menus, either place them on each table under glass or have them laminated for easier disinfection between each use. Avoid the cost and waste of disposable menus.
- **FACE MASKS** - If providing your staff with face coverings, consider purchasing washable, reusable face coverings. Many businesses are even printing masks with their branding. You will reduce waste, save valuable PPE for health workers, and add a whimsical marketing touch. Maybe your loyal customers will want to buy one for themselves!

WASTE REDUCTION, REUSE AND RECYCLING DURING COVID-19



Recycle

- **RECYCLABLES** - Continue to recycle! Your cardboard boxes and other recyclables are another company's raw materials for shipping and packaging. Ensuring only clean and empty recycling goes in the bin can reduce your waste hauling costs and help recover valuable materials.
 - **NON-RECYCLABLES** - Used PPE cannot be recycled! **Keep plastic bags, masks, wipes and disposable gloves out of recycling bins!** These items contaminate the recycling and can undo all of your hard efforts to separate and recycle.
 - **TRAINING** - Consider adding a refresher on recycling when you train staff on new procedures. Make sure they know what can be recycled and what cannot. Follow the guidelines of your local recycling/waste hauler and only put the materials they accept into your recycling bins.
- Do not bag your recyclables.**

Be Responsible

The economic recovery from COVID-19 will be challenging. You now have to “layer” reopening guidelines onto the regulations you have been following for years while trying to stay in business and take care of your employees and customers. Being environmentally responsible and sticking to sustainability initiatives can go hand in hand with your new ways of doing business. We can help you figure out ways to stay safe, stay in business, and protect the environment! Contact BEP and/or Nevada Recycles today.

Nevada Recycles <https://ndep.nv.gov/nevada-recycles>

Nevada Business Environmental Program (BEP) <http://www.unrbep.org/>

Resources

[EPA Video: Recycling During the Health Crisis](#)

[EPA Video: Don't Recycle Personal Protective Equipment](#)

[America Recycles](#)

[Reduce, Reuse, Recycle](#)

Southern Nevada Health District

<https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/coronavirus/guidance-to-reopen-businesses-and-permitted-facilities/>

Nevada Division of Public & Behavioral Health

http://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/OPHIE/dta/Hot_Topics/Coronavirus/

Washoe County Health District (Reno Sparks Washoe Regional Information Center)

<https://covid19washoe.com/businesses/>

WASTE REDUCTION, REUSE AND RECYCLING DURING COVID-19



Nevada Health Response: Website created by the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services and the Governor's Office to share information and resources statewide

<https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov/>

Northern Nevada Development Authority: Reopening Guide

https://nnda.org/partners/covid-19-business/?mc_cid=f9bb637cb5&mc_eid=70433e2f82

Small Business Development Center: Guide for Restaurants

<https://nevadasbdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Restaurant-Tip-Sheet-05152020.1.pdf>



The Business Environmental Program (BEP) provides free and confidential environmental compliance and management assistance and can help your business think about cleaning and waste issues. Our focus is on making Nevada's businesses stronger and more environmentally responsible.



Nevada Recycles

Nevada Division of
Environmental Protection

Nevada Recycles coordinates and administers education programs, events, presentations and various other activities to engage the community to recycle more and generate less waste.

DISCLAIMER: This guidance document is intended as general information and is not provided nor intended to act as a substitute for legal advice or other professional services. NDEP advises the regulated business community to read all applicable regulations and to check with state and local authorities, including local health districts, for the latest in guidelines and requirements for businesses reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic. All opinions, conclusions, and/or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NDEP.