City of Burnsville

Sustainability Tip

Greening Your Night to Unite Party

What's better than a summer get-together with neighbors? Eating alfresco is the perfect way to celebrate the season and Night to Unite. But it shouldn't mean leaving a trail of litter in the form of disposable plates and cutlery. There are plenty of ways to make your gathering green. Check out the following tips:

Cups, Dishes, and Flatware

Using dishes that can be washed an reused will significantly reduce the amount of waste created. If you have backyard composting, an alternative is biodegradable plates. Be sure to choose biodegradable rather than compostable. If using paper plates, consider 100% post-consumer (PCW) recycled content

Pitchers for Serving Beverages

At your party, use pitchers for serving beverages instead of handing out individual cans or bottles. Use lemonade or iced tea mix to put in a pitcher. Use glasses that can be washed and reused to make the least waste. If you use paper/plastic cups put out a permanent marker so guests can label their cups—therefore not using more than one cup.

Recycling Bins

Even if you use pitchers, there may still be individual cans and bottles. If you are hosting the event, put out easily identifiable recycling bins next to the garbage container. Depending on your hauler, plastic cups may be recycled, too. Check with your hauler. To use a recycling container like the one pictured here call 952-895-4511.

Propane Tanks/Lighter Fluid

Never throw away or puncture a propane tank. Tanks that seem empty still contain enough flammable gas to cause an explosion. Check with the retailer for a "take back" program. You can take unwanted tanks to the Recycling Zone in Eagan, free of charge. Unwanted lighter fluid and charcoal treated with starting fluid should also be brought to the Recycling Zone.

According to the Clean Air Council, each year Americans toss out enough paper and plastic cups, forks, and spoons to circle the equator 300 times