

Tailgating tips for waste reduction

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MADISON - The summer tailgating season is officially here and with it the Department of Natural Resources is providing tips on how to reduce waste at games, parties and other cookouts.

"A game day celebration by the grill is even better without litter or waste," says Cynthia Moore, DNR recycling program coordinator. "Whatever your team's colors, you can take a few simple steps to make sure your tailgate remains green."

Tailgaters, says Moore, can reduce waste by purchasing drinks and snacks in bulk without excess packaging. Cardboard casing and plastic film around beverage cases, for instance, are recyclable.

Tailgaters can also bring reusable dishware and cloth napkins to any event.

"You can often find low-cost, durable dishware for tailgating at a local thrift shop," Moore explains, "and bringing a large sealable container to hold dirty dishes until you get home will make transport and cleanup a breeze."

When grilling, Moore notes, tailgaters can use a chimney starter and lump charcoal, all-natural briquettes or an electric grill to cut down on air pollutants.

If driving to a game or park site, groups can often carpool. Not only is it eco-friendly, it also makes finding parking easier and limits the need for multiple designated drivers.

Finally, tailgaters and other groups can bring separate bags for collecting trash and recycling. Tailgaters can recycle leftover bottles, aluminum cans and clean cardboard but having a bag or two already handy makes final clean-up easy and efficient. In larger groups, they can also make recycling into a pre-game activity, asking friends and other fans to vote for their favorite team or player by tossing recyclables in labeled bags.

If there are no public bins on site, tailgaters should take the collected items home to recycle.

Event organizers and those in charge of any event venue should be sure to place trash and recycling bins in easily accessible, visible locations where visitors will be able to see and use them. DNR tips and other free resources for event and venue recycling are available in an online publication by searching the DNR website dnr.wi.gov for "[Recycling and Waste Reduction at Your Special Event \[PDF\]](#)," and more reuse and recycling ideas can be found by searching for "[recycling for all seasons](#)."