



Organizing and Implementing a Christmas Tree Recycling Event

A Municipal Recycling Coordinator's Guide to Christmas Tree
Collection and Recycling Events

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II. INTRODUCTION

For many years King County has provided suburban cities and unincorporated areas Christmas tree recycling through special collection events. Due to budget constraints, this service ended following the 2003-2004 Christmas season. In the absence of a comprehensive countywide Christmas tree recycling program, many cities may choose to begin or expand their own Christmas tree recycling programs.

This booklet is a step-by-step guide to help recycling coordinators in King County cities implement a Christmas tree recycling event. The guidelines in this booklet are based on King County's Special Household Hazardous Waste recycling events, which provided the successful model for King County's tree recycling events. City recycling coordinators can provide information on different models they use for tree recycling events.

A collection event is only one of the many different ways a city can educate and encourage residents about waste reduction and recycling practices. It can complement existing efforts such as curbside pickup programs and private recycling enterprises. Benefits of a special collection event include:

- Provides a "free" and convenient opportunity for residents to drop off material from a special waste stream that may otherwise be thrown away.
- Increases public awareness about the proper handling and disposal of organic materials.
- Augments existing recycling services, and in some instances, provides the only free or local recycling option (for example, many residents of multifamily housing lack access to regular yard waste services).
- Offers an opportunity for recycling staff to assess residents' preferences for and satisfaction with recycling services.
- Allows distribution of educational materials that address a wide range of solid waste issues.

It is hoped that the information provided in this guide will assist you in organizing or improving the Christmas tree collection and recycling program in your community.

III. Planning Your Event

Select the Date, Time and Location

Date:

In the past, King County held Christmas tree recycling events during the first three weekends after Christmas, but found that the third weekend (usually the second Saturday and Sunday of the new year) brought in a very small percentage of the total number of trees recycled. Recently, Treecycling events have been held during the first weekend after Christmas and the first weekend in January. Of these two weekends, the second brings in by far the largest number of trees. For example, at two sites during the 2002/2003 event, the following numbers of trees were collected:

Date	Site One	Site Two
Dec. 28/29	476	1,810
Jan. 4/5	7,133	16,291

Although the effectiveness of collection during Christmas weekend may increase during years when the holiday falls early in the week, it appears that for events limited to a single weekend, the first weekend of the new year is the best time to schedule Christmas tree recycling events.

Previous experience with scheduling recycling events for other materials has shown that staff and participants are likely to be unavailable during three-day weekends. Therefore, if New Year's Day falls on a Friday, it would be better to schedule the event for the second weekend in January.

Time:

In our experience, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm is the best time to hold the event. When setting a time, there are several things you should consider:

- ✓ Set hours that are convenient for staff, vendors and participants.
- ✓ Consider the availability of artificial lighting at the site.
- ✓ If no lights are available, hours may need to be adjusted so that staff won't have to work in the dark. In January, this can affect both start and closing times.
- ✓ Allow approximately 1.5 hours to set up the site before the event and about an hour to break down afterwards.
- ✓ Keep in mind as well that some vendors and staff may have to drive a long distance to the site.
- ✓ When determining a closing time, consider that staff will be exhausted after a full day's activities and participation starts to drop off by mid to late afternoon.

Location:

Liability and union contracts

The decision to hold the event on city or privately owned land depends on two primary factors, liability and union contracts. Use of privately owned property may require rental payment and additional paperwork and insurance costs. However, your union contracts may require you to use city employees for chipping on city property. In this case overtime payments could result in higher costs for your event. Both of these considerations should be evaluated before deciding between city and private land. (See the section on “Liability and Insurance Issues” for more information.)

Traffic

Choose a site that can accommodate the traffic generated by your event. There should be convenient access for participants, heavy machinery and emergency vehicles. Lanes should be wide enough to allow for passing or through traffic; otherwise you’ll have bottlenecks and participants will get frustrated. Make sure you can control or limit the number of entry and exit areas at the site. Allow an ample queuing area within your site or on the approach to the site for the backups you *will* experience. Consult with your Police Department’s Traffic Division for advice on traffic impacts, queuing strategies and traffic flow patterns. If possible, walk the site with a traffic officer- their expertise can be invaluable.

Public Access and Amenities

You should use a site that is familiar to the public. Check for the availability of restroom facilities, water and a telephone on or near the site. If your preferred site lacks these services, they can be brought in. If it is possible, choose a site with a covered workspace to protect staff and participants from the adverse weather that is almost inevitable in January. Make sure all vehicles and equipment can fit under the covered area. Measure the clearance of the covered area to ensure equipment and vehicles will fit underneath. Large, paved parking lots often work best. It is important that the collection site be paved because unpaved areas are generally muddy this time of year. Participants could get their cars stuck in the mud, and the working conditions will be dirty and miserable. Gravel parking lots do not work well because tree branches will pick up pieces of gravel that will damage the chipper. Set aside an area of 1400 sq. ft. for the chipper. Depending on the end-use that you choose for the wood chips produced, they may need to be stored onsite for several weeks. Try to choose a site where this will not be inconvenient.

Identify Collection Guidelines

Determine your collection goals. Do you want to maximize the number of trees collected, or provide a recycling option for underserved residents only? Three groups of people you will need to plan for are tree lot owners, fundraising groups and residents of nearby cities or unincorporated areas. It is important to determine early in the planning stages whether you will accept trees from these groups. You should be very clear who your audience is in all promotional materials.

Your chipper determines other limitations. In most cases, tree trunks must be less than 4 inches in diameter to pass through the chipper. In all cases, trees must be completely free of foreign material. Tree stands, flocking, tinsel, ornaments, wire and other materials dull chipper blades, lower the quality of the chipped product and can block the chipper or be thrown out of it, causing a safety hazard. Woody material in wreaths, swags and evergreen boughs is generally safe to chip, although they are often tied together with wire that cannot be chipped.

Address Liability and Insurance Issues

Liability and insurance issues affect all aspects of a collection event. Prior to the event, verify the insurance coverage of all vendors, staff and volunteers participating in the event. It is important to understand your responsibility as the sponsoring agency and to clarify liability issues with vendors and the site property owner. Most of the following information on liability and insurance is taken from Washington State Department of Ecology's publication "Household Hazardous Waste Guidelines for Conducting Collection Events."

Staff Insurance Coverage: Staff employed by the city or by vendors are usually insured through their employer and worker's compensation. Be sure to have event staff provide you with verification of their insurance or require that insurance coverage be a condition of working at the event.

If volunteers assist with the event, check with their sponsoring agency and your city's risk manager or attorney to determine whether volunteers can be covered under an existing insurance policy as additional insured persons.

Participant Liability: In Washington, cities are not liable for any injuries sustained by event participants unless the injuries occur as a result of the city's negligence. Similarly, the city is not liable for any injuries sustained by participants while traveling to the collection site unless it can be shown that the injury resulted from the city's negligence.

Property Damage Liability: As the event sponsor, your city is liable for any property damage that occurs at the collection site as a result of your event. For this reason, it is better not to leave any equipment or materials at the collection site before or after the event. Unattended items attract attention from vandals, resulting in damage to equipment, materials or site property. Whether the damage that occurs is "sudden" like a fire, or "non-sudden and gradual" like ground water contamination, your city will be held responsible.

As the above information shows, it is important to be aware of your city's potential liability when planning a collection event. Through careful selection of qualified vendors, properly trained staff and comprehensive safety-oriented site planning, you can minimize liability and ensure a successful event. A sample hold harmless agreement and request for proof of insurance is given in Appendix A.

Estimate Participation and Quantity of Material

It is difficult to determine the number of participants and the quantity of materials to expect at your event. Of course, it helps if your city has held a similar event in the past upon which projections can be based. If this is the first treecycling event your city has held, check with neighboring cities that have held collection events for information on their experience.

Factors that will determine the number of participants and the quantity of materials to expect include:

- The population of your city.
- The means and scope of notification.
- The notice period – the earlier that notice is given, the larger the participation.
- The number and convenience of other tree recycling options in your city.
- The limits placed on customer base and number of trees per customer.
- The number of years that your city has held the event – people tend to use whatever method they have used in the past.

Participation rates have varied widely between events held in the past.

Site Design

A well thought out site design can improve the safety, ease and speed with which participants move through the site. Develop a detailed site map which shows the entrance to and exit from the site, the location of chipping equipment, where the chips will be stored (if they are to be made available to the public), the designated queuing area, and the placement of traffic cones and barricades. A sample site map is shown in Appendix B. The following guidelines should be considered when designing your collection site:

- Have only one entrance to the site. This minimizes confusion and makes it easier for staff to direct traffic and distribute questionnaires and informational material.
- Have only one exit. Exits, unless well marked, can look like entrances and participants may enter at the wrong place. If you distribute questionnaires, it is easier to collect them as participants leave through the only exit.
- Provide ample queuing room within the site or on the approach to the site. Make sure the queuing area does not adversely impact normal traffic.
- Allow parking space for dropping off trees, and picking up wood chips.
- If questionnaires are being used, allow space for cars to park or pull over to complete the questionnaires without impeding traffic flow of other participants.

- Even with staff supervision, unacceptable materials will be dropped off. Provide a space or container to keep these materials separate from the trees.
- For safety's sake, request that participants keep their children in the car.
- Use traffic cones, moveable barricades, directional arrows, "Stop", "Do not enter" and other traffic signs to channel vehicle flow within the site. Directional signs outside the site can be helpful in guiding participants to the correct entrance. At the end of the event, "No Dumping" signs should be posted at the site entrance to discourage "delayed participation." Proper signage not only decreases confusion, it also helps protect the city from claims of negligence if an accident occurs on site. Your city's street department may be able to produce these signs for you.

Locating Vendors

Contact the recycling and/or garbage companies that operate in your city about participating in the event. They may be willing to lend you equipment such as dumpsters and portable toilets, as well as provide you with hauling services. Citywide collection events are a good opportunity for companies to advertise their services and maintain a cooperative relationship with the city.

King County maintains the searchable online "Recycle and Reuse Database," that includes all of the licensed yard waste recyclers in the county. This excellent resource, which is updated regularly, provides a good starting point for locating a chipping service. The database is at: <http://www6.metrokc.gov/dnr/swd/recycle/recycle.asp>

Ask other cities that have held collection events for the names of reputable companies. Choose companies that are well established. Although tree chipping does not require a high level of horticultural skill, remember that many participants will assume that you endorse the practices of the company you hire. If you work with an arborist or tree service, select a responsible company that does not participate in unsound environmental and horticultural practices such as tree topping.

Estimate Costs

The overall cost of implementing a city wide collection event depends on several factors:

- ✓ the means and scope of public notification,
- ✓ the degree to which paid staff or volunteers are used,
- ✓ the expected number of participants,
- ✓ the availability of equipment borrowed from city departments or the cost of renting equipment, and
- ✓ vendor costs.

In estimating the costs of a collection event, it is helpful to use a budget outline. The following outline lists the main cost categories and specific components that may be included in each category. Since each city's collection event will differ, no dollar amounts have been listed, but a sample budget for a small city is provided in Appendix C.

Notification

- Recycled paper
- Graphic design
- Printing
- Folding
- Bulk mail preparation
- Postage

Labor and Staff

- Number of staff X overtime rate
- Or
- Vendor contract amount
- Or
- Lunch and drinks for volunteers

Equipment

- Rental
- Delivery

Disposal of Materials and Site Cleanup

- Hauling and disposal of trees dumped after the event
- Hauling wood chips to restoration or landscape sites for reuse
- Sweeper rental and/or operator to clean the parking lot

Miscellaneous

- Cell phone minutes
- Film and batteries for camera
- Portable toilet rental
- Etc.

Staffing Roles and Responsibilities

The decision to use volunteers, city employees or vendor's employees to staff your collection event is based on several factors: budget limitations, the availability of inter-departmental assistance, the ability of vendors to provide staff, the skills needed to perform certain tasks, and the availability of volunteers.

Some general guidelines for staffing include:

- Assign yourself the role of Event Coordinator. Don't make the mistake of assigning yourself any other role. You are the only person who knows the overall scheme of things and what is supposed to happen on the day of the event.
- Ask other departments within your city for assistance in staffing your event. This is a good opportunity to foster inter-departmental cooperation.
- It is better to be overstaffed than understaffed. Inadequate staffing causes delays that frustrate participants. Also, if staff are overworked, they may be reluctant to participate in future events.
- Choose staff with multiple skills. If one person can operate both a front-end loader and a street sweeper, this saves having to pay two peoples' salaries.
- Ensure that event staff know what their roles and responsibilities are, the hours they are expected to work, and the rate at which they will be paid, if they will be paid.
- Provide staff with any training or information they will need to perform their duties safely and effectively.
- Inform staff of the appropriate clothing and footwear they'll need and who will supply it. Consider providing some identifying clothing, armband, or button for all event staff to wear so participants will know whom to contact for assistance.
- Provide reflective vests for staff directing traffic. If they will be located on a public road, they are required to wear reflective vests and carry a card that certifies they have completed instruction in traffic direction. These requirements do not apply when directing traffic on private property.

Letters of Agreement

Be clear about your expectations of volunteers, the chipping vendor and the site owner. Discuss your expectations first, and then follow up with a letter of agreement. In your conversations and letters, clearly spell out each party's roles and responsibilities. A sample is provided in Appendix D.

Issues to discuss with the property owner and to include in the letter are:

- Date, time, location within the property, and purpose of the collection event.
- Expected participation.
- Times beyond the event when access to the site will be required.
- Responsibility and schedule for site clean up.
- Liability and insurance data.
- Site rental fees.

Issues to discuss with the chipping vendor and to include in the letter are:

- Date, time, precise location and purpose of the collection event.
- Type of equipment, number of staff, and hauling arrangements to be provided by each party. Because chipping machines can be dangerous, it is better for vendors to provide their own trained staff.
- Who will provide services such as traffic direction, passing out informational material and unloading trees from participants' vehicles.
- Expected number of participants and storage capacity needed if chips are to be contained or hauled. When in doubt, plan on higher participation.
- How and/or where the collected wood chips will be recycled.
- Cost and payment requirements.
- Time that you expect the vendor to be onsite to set up their equipment, and the time they will remove their equipment. Set up and removal should occur on the day of the event unless you can prevent access to the site before and after the event. People are more likely to dump trees and unwanted items, and the risk of vandalism is higher if equipment is left overnight before or after the event.
- Request that within a given period after the event the vendor provide you with the number of trees collected.
- Include a statement about liability and cost.
- Describe arrangements for lunch, breaks and the availability of restroom facilities.
- Request written confirmation of arrangements prior to the event.
- Enclose a "Hold Harmless Agreement" for the vendor to sign and return before the event.
- Request a copy of the vendor's Insurance Certificate or Proof of Insurance to be returned together with the "Hold Harmless Agreement."
- Enclose a copy of any printed materials or flyers that advertise the event and the vendor's participation in it.
- Provide a map with directions to the event site and a copy of the site map showing where equipment should be set up.

Issues to discuss with volunteers and to include in the letter are:

- Date, time, precise location and purpose of the collection event.
- Date and times that each volunteer is expected to be present.
- State which specific tasks volunteers will perform.
- Identify appropriate clothing and any materials, such as gloves, that volunteers are required to supply.
- Describe arrangements for lunch, breaks and the availability of restroom facilities.
- Provide a map with directions to the event site and a copy of the site map showing where equipment will be set up.

Publicity

Notifying Relevant City Departments and City Employees of the Event

Certain city departments should be notified of your collection event plans prior to the day of the event. Both the Police and Fire Departments should be notified and consulted about the event. The Police Department can provide good strategies for mitigating traffic impacts, and the Fire Department can provide specific safety information regarding collection of flammable material. Additionally, as emergency response professionals, it is important that they know about the event in advance.

A memo to each of these departments outlining your collection event plans and, if applicable, confirming their participation is recommended.

Inform your city's elected officials and leaders *prior* to notifying the public at large. Also, extend an invitation via email or inter-office memo to all city staff to participate in the event. Such an offer is usually well received and is a good way to promote your city's recycling program.

Notify the county of your event details. King County Solid Waste Division's Recycling Information Hotline receives inquiries about Christmas tree recycling starting as early as November. If they are informed about your event, they can direct callers who live in your city to your event.

Notifying the Public of the Event

There are several means by which you can notify the public of your collection event:

- ✓ press releases
- ✓ flyers, posters
- ✓ utility bill inserts
- ✓ city newsletters and web page
- ✓ direct mail (via bulk rate)
- ✓ newspapers
- ✓ city cable channel
- ✓ notices in recycling bins

The means you choose to notify the public will depend on several factors such as cost, timing, your target population, the public's preferred means of receiving information, and the effectiveness and availability of existing public information channels. Whichever means you choose, make sure residents receive notice at least four weeks in advance. This gives them time to plan ahead.

Some advantages and disadvantages of various means of notification are listed below:

<u>Notification Options</u>	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
Utility Bill Inserts	Inexpensive, reach all single family addresses. Predictable mail date, accommodates details.	Multi-family residents not notified. May be overlooked as junk mail.
City Newsletter	Inexpensive, reaches entire city population. Can accommodate detailed information.	May be overlooked. Must coordinate with newsletter schedule.
Direct Mail	Reaches entire city. The preferred means to receive recycling information. ¹ Can control mailing date.	Expensive. May be overlooked as junk mail.
Newspaper	Inexpensive. Is a preferred means for residents to obtain recycling information. ¹	Reaches beyond city population. Can't accommodate details. Generates phone calls.
Notes in Bins	Inexpensive. Reaches all single family residents. Can accommodate details.	Doesn't reach multi-family residents. Must coordinate distribution with recycling company. May be overlooked.
Press Releases	Free, may create stronger impression through media coverage.	Press may not pick up story. Generates many phone calls.
Posters	More eye-catching than mailed items.	Smaller audience. Expensive.
Flyers	More noticeable than mailed items, permits details.	Reaches smaller audience. Expensive.

1. David L. Stitzel, "Public Perception of Recycling Information Sources," City of Redmond, January 1991, p.26

As the above list shows, there clearly are tradeoffs in choosing one means of notification over another. All of the above factors will determine how you choose to notify the public of your event. Since many of the publicity options listed above describe distribution methods for some sort of flyer, the next section describes what information to include in a flyer when publicizing your event.

Developing a Flyer

All of the information you need to convey can fit on a single sided 8 ½ by 11-inch sheet of paper. You can probably use less space, depending on your graphics and the amount of detail that you provide. The less ambiguous your flyer, the fewer phone calls you'll receive and the fewer unacceptable items will be brought to the collection site.

Depending on the method of distribution, the flyer can serve as an "entry pass" that residents can be required to present at the entrance. By counting the entry passes you can easily track the number of event participants. (You can also ask your chipping staff to count trees as they load them into the chipper). See Appendix E for a sample flyer.

Information contained in the flyer should include:

- Date, time and location
- City's logo, recycling and other helpful graphics
- Restrictions on number, size, condition and types of materials
- Who is eligible to participate
- Contact information
- How to find information on other tree-cycling options
- Names of sponsoring city departments, participating vendors, funding agencies and other involved groups
- Any added features of your event such as the distribution of resource information, availability of Master Recycler Composters to answer questions, or free wood chips
- Notation that the paper used for the flyer is recycled and recyclable (make sure that it is!)

Equipment and Supplies

Require that vendors provide all of their own equipment, protective gear and supplies for the event. Also, ask your city's garbage and recycling haulers to provide you with equipment or assistance. Equipment not provided by vendors or haulers may be borrowed from other city departments. As a last resort, rent the items you need from a rental company.

The following lists equipment and supplies that may be needed, as well as their purpose or location, the quantity needed, and possible sources for obtaining these items. Your own list will differ depending on how many participants you expect, the site chosen, and the availability of items to borrow.

<u>Eqpmt./Supplies</u>	<u>Purpose/Place</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Provided By</u>
Wood Chipper	Allow at least 1440 ft ² for the chipper. Chip directly into a truck for safety.	One.	Vendor, city parks dept., rental service.
Garbage Dumpster	Used to collect unchippable material.	One, size depends on participation.	City garbage hauler.
Gloves	All staff who handle trees should use work gloves.	Depends on number of staff.	City, vendor or volunteers.
Safety Glasses	All staff who operate the chipper must wear safety glasses.	Depends on number of staff.	City or vendor.
Shovels	If chips are offered to the public, shovels may be provided.	Depends on expected participation.	City.
Front-End Loader	After the event, if chips have been piled for public access, a front loader will be necessary to remove the chips.	One.	City, vendor or rental service.

<u>Eqpmt./Supplies</u>	<u>Purpose/Place</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Provided By</u>
Food & Drinks	For volunteer comfort.	Generous serving for each volunteer. 4-5 drinks/person.	Deli catering or grocery store.
Camera and Video Recorder	To document event for use in presentations, newsletters, etc.	One of each, black and white as well as color film.	City or rental company.
Questionnaires	Distribute at entry, collect at exit.	High estimate of expected participation.	City.
Table & Chairs	Volunteer rest area.	One table and several chairs.	City.
Pencils	For participants to complete questionnaires.	One or two boxes.	City.
Informational Material	Distribute at entry or exit.	Depends on expected participation.	City, county, state, MRCs.
Lidded Boxes	To store informational material and questionnaires.	One for each entrance to the site.	City or retail.
Hand Cleaner	For staff, esp. if food is provided.	Depends on number of staff.	City or retail.
Portable Toilet	For staff comfort.	One.	City, vendor or rental company.
Traffic Counter Box or Hand-held Counter	At the entry or used by staff to count vehicles entering the site.	One.	City- street or public works dept.
Reflective Safety Vests	To be worn by staff.	Depends on number of staff.	City- street dept.

<u>Eqpmt./Supplies</u>	<u>Purpose/Place</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Provided By</u>
Street Sweeper	Many owners request their site be swept after the event to remove debris.	One.	City- street or public works dept.
Traffic Cones & Directional Signs	Channel traffic flow within the site. Signs with a dry erase surface can be reused.	Depends on site. Estimate high.	City- street or public works dept.
No Dumping Signs	Should be posted at the end of the event to minimize "late contributions."	One for each entrance to the site.	City- street or public works dept.

Wood Chip Recycling

How you recycle the wood chips produced at your event will affect many aspects of your site design as well as operations during the event, so do not wait until the last minute to address this fundamental issue. Wood chips may be made available to the public, taken to a commercial recycler, or used by the city. Each option has advantages and complications.

If the public is allowed to take the chips, the first concern is safety. Chips come out of a chipper with a great deal of force. They cannot be blown out directly onto the ground at the same time that people are collecting them. Either a separate collection day must be offered (which would require selecting a site that is available for a longer period of time), or chips must be moved to a separate area for public collection. This may be in the same parking lot, as long as it is a safe distance away from the chipper. If chips are to be moved, it is easiest to chip directly into a truck or trailer. The public can then remove chips directly from the vehicle, presenting another safety issue as they climb on public equipment, or the chips can be dumped out into piles on the ground. If expected participation is high, this method is probably best. However, a back up plan is needed in case wood chips are left over after the event. If your site is appropriate as a storage facility, chips can be left in place and the public can collect them over a longer period of time. If the site must be cleared, removing the left over chips can present a significant portion of the cost of the program. A backhoe and truck, as well as the staff to operate them, will be required.

If a commercial recycler is used, they may provide the site for your event. Otherwise, additional trucks will be needed, so that one can load while another hauls. Of course, you will have to budget to pay for recycling.

It is usually not hard to find uses for wood chips. Parks and restoration projects use wood chips for mulch, and many composting facilities use wood chips as a bulking agent. If you find a use for the chips before your event, it will be easier to plan deliveries, even though you may not know how much material you will produce. Especially in restoration projects, the demand is often for “as much as you can give me.” You may even use multiple trucks or trailers during the event, and haul the chips as they are produced.

Regardless of the recycling method you choose, you will be faced with disposal of whole trees. No matter how much signage or promotion you prepare, people will drop off trees after the event. Once the first tree is dumped, others will accumulate at a surprising rate. You should plan for this in advance. If the property owner is left to deal with post event dumping problems, they will not be eager to host your event in the future.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

If you are working with a chipping contractor or a recycling facility, meet with them before the day of the event to discuss set up and operations. By the day of the event, there should only be *planned* last minute tasks to do. It helps to have a list of all the supplies you must bring to the site and all the tasks left to do on the day of the event. As the event coordinator, your duties include:

- Plan to arrive at the collection site at least half an hour before the event starts if you are using a contractor. If city staff or volunteers are manning the event, arrive at least an hour and a half before the start of the event in order to supervise the entire set-up. Decide in advance if you will need someone to arrive early with you to help you set up traffic cones, signs, a refreshment table and other materials.
- Have a brief meeting with staff and volunteers, or speak to each individually as they arrive to go over their responsibilities for the day. Make sure they know where safety supplies, bathroom facilities and refreshments are located. Request that staff consult you in the case of an emergency or questionable situation.
- Start on time. Participants will already be lined up well before the official start time, so try not to keep them waiting any longer than necessary.
- Once the event begins, your time will primarily be spent assisting participants- directing traffic, answering questions, and occasionally helping to unload trees or load chips. Your interaction with participants is valuable for two reasons- participants receive personalized service and you receive direct feedback on how participants feel about the event.
- Do check in with staff and volunteers throughout the day to make sure things are operating smoothly on their end. Especially if things get busy, they may not be able to come to you.
- During slack times, take pictures and record video. These can be used in future promotional material and presentations.
- Close on time. Staff and volunteers will be ready to pack up, clean up and go home, and there's no need to keep them longer than scheduled.
- When the event is over, ensure the site is as clean as when you started. Remove all supplies, equipment, directional signs and other traces of your event as soon as possible, and no later than you promised the property owner. Hang "No Dumping" signs immediately to prevent accumulation of trees after the event. Once materials are removed, a street sweeper can clean the site in a matter of minutes.

V. EVALUATION

Evaluation of your collection event actually begins *during* the event. Write down the suggestions and comments you receive from participants and staff. This feedback is instructive and will be helpful in planning your next event.

Take time to debrief with staff. Depending on staff availability, a quick debriefing can take place directly after the event or on another day shortly following the event. This will help you ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of your event from others' perspectives.

Data Collection and Reporting

Request in your letters of agreement with vendors that they record the amount of material collected. This could include a count of trees recycled, as well as an estimate of the yardage of wood chips produced. Counting the number of vehicles that bring trees can be illuminating as well.

Try to follow up on how wood chips are used. If chips are available to the public, count how many vehicles remove wood chips. Or try to get a count of how many trees were mulched at a park that accepted leftovers, to obtain a sense for how much recycling benefit your event provided.

Compile questionnaire results. These results, including anecdotal comments from participants, can provide more than a measure of participant satisfaction with the event. They can also provide a variety of information about participant attitudes and practices regarding recycling, natural gardening and other topics.

Send thank you notes to everyone who assisted with the event: staff, vendors, volunteers and anyone else who lent time or equipment to the project. Include information about the results of the event so staff know the outcome of their efforts. It's also a good idea to send copies of these letters to employees' supervisors as further acknowledgement of the assistance received.

Finally, write a report about the collection event which includes such information as: costs, number of households served, amount of materials collected, a comparison of this event to other events your city has held, and analysis of questionnaire results, as well as changes for future events. Develop a standard reporting format and measurements so that each event can be easily compared with other events.

VI. TREECYCLING CHECKLIST & TIME TABLE

<u>Prior to Event</u>	<u>Time Line</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Select date, time and location	Oct. 15-Nov. 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Address liability and insurance issues	Nov. 1-Nov. 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Estimate costs, participation and quantities	Nov. 1-Nov. 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide means of public notification	Nov. 7- Nov.15
<input type="checkbox"/> Design site map	Nov. 7- Nov.15
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm vendor participation	Nov. 7- Nov.15
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and print publicity materials (posters, flyers)	Nov. 7- Nov.15
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify county, city officials, other relevant departments	Nov. 15 -Dec. 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and send letters of agreement	Nov. 15 -Dec. 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify the public	Nov. 20 -Dec. 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange staffing	Dec. 1 - Dec. 7
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure equipment and supplies	Dec. 1 - Dec. 7
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop/gather informational materials for distribution at event	Dec. 1 - Dec. 7
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop questionnaire	Dec. 1 - Dec. 7
<input type="checkbox"/> Press release	Dec. 15-Dec. 20
<input type="checkbox"/> Reconfirm arrangements with vendor	Dec. 15-Dec. 20
<input type="checkbox"/> Order/purchase food for volunteers	Dec. 20-Dec. 25

<u>After Event</u>	<u>Time Line</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove wood chips to end use site	1 week
<input type="checkbox"/> Debrief with staff	1 week
<input type="checkbox"/> Collect participation data from vendor	1 week
<input type="checkbox"/> Send thank you notes	2 weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze questionnaire data	2-3 weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Write a final report on the event	2-3 weeks

VII. OTHER MODELS OF ORGANIZATION

The guidelines in this booklet are based upon King County's experiences in conducting special tree recycling events. These events were planned based on the organizational model of the Household Hazardous Waste special collection events, in which a parking lot is set up as a temporary recycling drop off facility. Several cities in the county have successfully conducted tree recycling events using different methods than those described here, and other methods may prove to be more appropriate for your city. Communication with other city recycling coordinators can reveal useful information not included in this guide, but two examples of creative approaches to tree recycling are presented in brief here.

A Cooperative Venture

For the 2003/2004 holiday season, the cities of Carnation and Duvall partnered with each other and with their local Boy Scout troops to provide Christmas tree recycling for their residents. Before the event, Boy Scouts delivered envelopes to residents with instructions to put their tree together with a donation out in their driveway on the day of the event. On that day, the Boy Scouts picked up trees from residents' driveways and delivered them to the chipping site. The school district donated use of a wood chipper, and staff to operate it. The chipper was used in the morning in Duvall, and in the afternoon in Carnation. Residents were also welcome to deliver their own tree to the chipping site for no charge. In Duvall, the wood chips were made available to residents for free to use as mulch. In Carnation, the chipping site was located at a tree farm, where they paid rent in wood chips. The event was advertised in the city newsletter, local newspaper, local cable channel and on the city and county web sites. The two cities, whose combined population is close to 7,000, collected a total of 706 trees.

Tapping Existing Resources

Rather than try to set up a single event with overhead and fixed costs, the City of Redmond decided to work with established commercial recyclers already operating in the city. The city agreed to pay \$1.50 for each tree recycled, thus taking on only the marginal costs involved in a recycling project. They contracted with two different recyclers to ensure that residents had recycling options both during the week and on the weekends. A coupon was printed in the city's newsletter that is direct mailed to every residence in the city. Anyone bearing a coupon could bring a tree to either recycling facility for a fee of \$1.00. Although participation results are not yet available, Redmond recycling coordinators found that the program went very smoothly and provided a convenient recycling option for their residents.

VIII. APPENDICES

a. Hold Harmless Agreement and Request for Proof of Insurance

The undersigned hereby waives any right of recovery and releases the City of Townsville and its officers, officials, agents and employees from any and all injury to persons and damage to property, and further agrees and undertakes to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City of Townsville from and against any and all claims, damages, actions, liability, and expenses, including attorneys' and other professional fees, in connection with loss of life, personal injury, and/or damage to property arising from or out of the undersigned's participation in the City of Townsville Recycling Program's collection event, on or about the date of January X, 20xx, except as arising from any negligence or criminal acts of the City of Townsville and its officers, officials, agents and employees.

The undersigned further acknowledges and agrees that the City of Townsville does not assume any responsibility whatsoever for any property of the undersigned and shall not hold the City of Townsville liable for any loss or damage to same.

Name of Vendor: _____

Signature of Vendor Representative: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

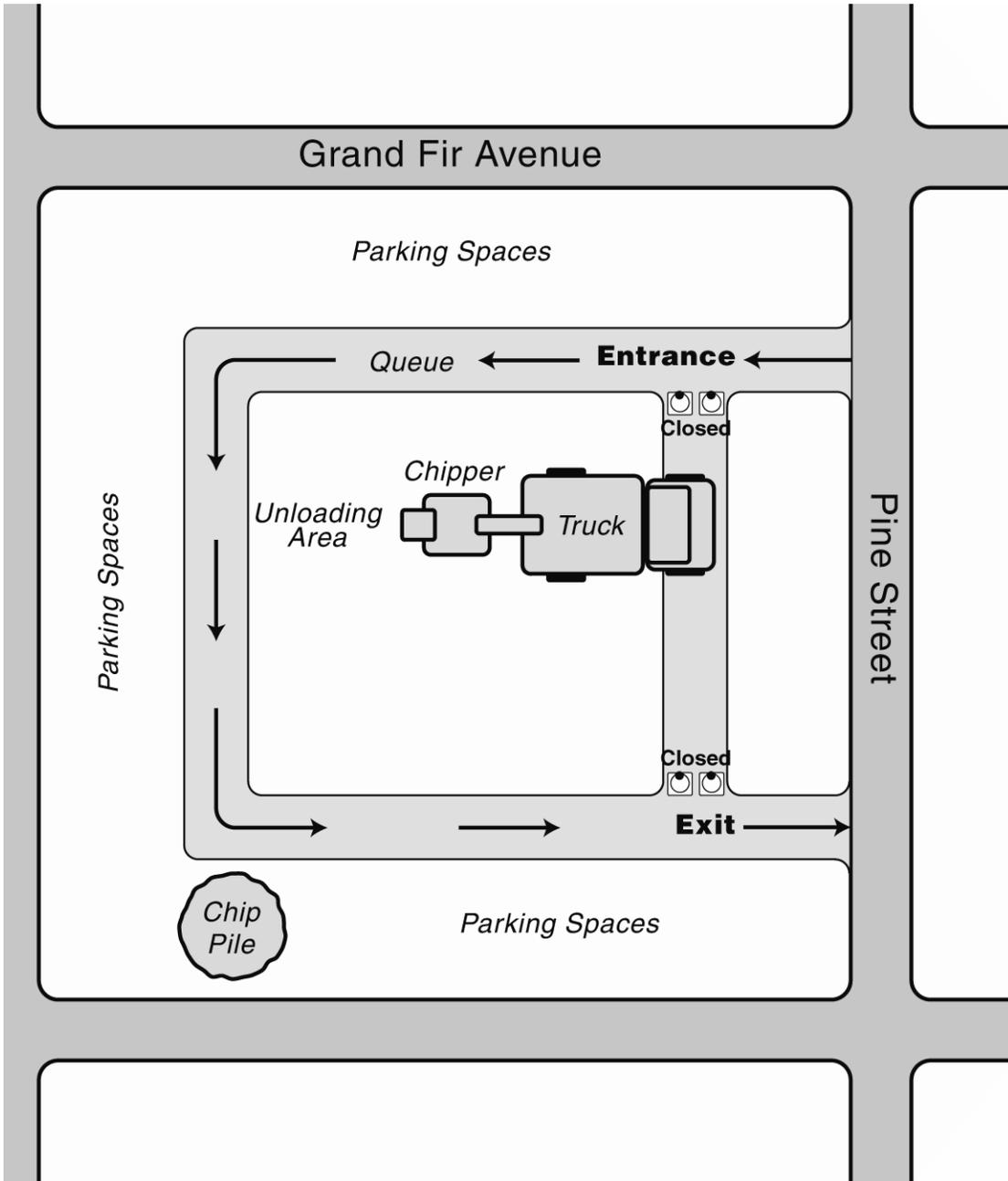
Address: _____

Phone: _____

Please attach proof of your Liability Insurance coverage to this *signed* Hold Harmless agreement and return to the City of Townsville Recycling Program: 123 Green St., Townsville, WA 98000.

Please note: the City of Townsville shall be given (30) calendar days prior written notice by certified mail of any cancellation, lapse, reduction or modification of your liability insurance.

b. Sample Site Map



c. Sample Budget

The following is a sample budget for a tree recycling event sponsored by cities with population between 5,000 and 10,000 using a borrowed chipper and offering wood chips to the public or using them onsite.

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Total Expense</u>
Printing and Distribution	\$760.22
City Personnel	\$388.93
Operating Supplies/Misc.	\$48.86
Total Expense:	\$1198.01

d. Letter of Agreement

October 20, 20xx

Chip Wood
456 Green St.
Townsville, WA 98000

Dear Mr. Wood,

This letter is to confirm your participation in the annual Townsville Recycling Program's collection of Christmas trees at the Forest Park site at 789 S. Pine Street. The dates of collection for this year are:

January 3 & 4 20xx Saturday and Sunday
Posted hours of collection: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day.

This year's program will run as follows: Townsville's selected Contractor will be chipping the trees as they are dropped off and then Townsville residents will be allowed to take the chips home. At the close of the program, the City of Townsville will coordinate with you to return the site to its pre-collection condition.

I appreciate your willingness to work with the City's Recycling Program as a Tree-Cycling Partner. Please sign and date this letter of agreement and fax it to me at (425) 555-1234. Please do not hesitate to call me at (425) 555-5678, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Douglas Fir
City of Townsville
Recycling Coordinator

e. Sample
Flyer



**KING
COUNTY
RESIDENTIAL
TREE-CYCLING**

**Free tree chips for residents
while supplies last**

Recycle and put your tree to work!
January 3 & 4, 2004

Your Christmas Tree-Cycling Options: ❶ Put your tree in with your curbside yardwaste. See SWD website or contact your hauler for details. ❷ Your city may have a free treecycling collection program. See SWD website or contact your city recycling coordinator for details. ❸ Community groups may offer tree-cycling collection. Watch for fliers in your neighborhood. ❹ Bring your tree to one of these locations between **9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** on program collection day:

Bothell Ricketts Administrative Center 18315 Bothell Way N.E.	Federal Way Celebration Park 1111 S. 324th Street	Renton Boeing Plant NE Park Dr. & Garden Ave. N.
Vashon Island Old Vashon Landfill 18910 Westside Highway SW	SeaTac Old Boulevard Park School 12833 20th Ave. S.	Marymoor Park 6046 West Lake Sammamish Pkwy NE

Restrictions Apply: no artificial, fire-proofed or flocked trees. Remove ANY hooks, ornaments, tinsel, and stands. Tree base must be 4 inches or less in diameter. Limit of 3 trees per car. Trees will not be accepted from fundraising groups. Contact Solid Waste Division or visit web site <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd> for more details.

Questions? Visit our website at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd> or call King County Solid Waste
Mon - Fri 8:30 am - 4:30 pm at: 206-296-4466; toll free 1-800-325-6165, ext. 6-4466; 711 (TTY Relay).

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