

Greening Your Simcha JRC's Environmentally Preferred Simcha Plan

Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation (JRC) Evanston, Illinois

In consideration of the values-based decision making that led to the LEED certification of our new building, the attached Green Simcha Plan serves to inform and guide decision-making as it relates to events held in the building.

Importantly, we view these guidelines as an opportunity to educate and inspire staff, congregants and guests as to the Jewish values that are at the heart of our JRC community, and to empower all to make conscious decisions in the life of the congregation. In doing so, may we be inspired to bring these values out into our work and home environments as well and truly live as stewards of the earth.

Areas to Consider Greening and Steps to Get You There

INVITATIONS

- Print invitations on recycled paper with the maximum amount of post-consumer waste content available. Encourage guests to recycle invitations.
- Avoid lined envelopes.
- Consider post-card style invitations.
- Ask for replies to phone or email account rather than including a separate reply card.
- Print with low-toxic dyes or soy ink, double-sided where possible.
- Consider eliminating paper invitations altogether and using an on-line invitation program such as Evite; or consider Evite for events surrounding the main event or as a "Save-the-Date."

B'NAI MITZVAH BOOKLET

- Consider eliminating a printed booklet and prepare a poster-size display of photos, quotes, poems, etc. to be available for viewing at the oneg.
- If preparing a service supplement, print on recycled paper with the maximum amount of post-consumer waste content available. Print with low-toxic dyes or soy ink, double-sided as possible. Recycle following event.

ROOM/TABLE DECORATIONS

- Consider centerpieces which can be donated or re-used.
- Consider re-usable table linens first; paper next.
- Avoid plastic where possible, or choose plastic made with recycled content.
- If using balloons, consider latex first; make sure balloons are responsibly discarded after use.

FOOD/FOOD SERVICE

- Supply fair-trade organic coffee
- Consider the use of organic or preservative/chemical free, healthier food where possible.
- Consider the use of locally grown food, and/or food that is minimally processed and packaged.
- Choose service items including serving pieces, plates, napkins, cups, silverware with these considerations:
 1. Consider first using reusable service items wherever it is practical and cost effective to do so. JRC can provide service for 100 guests; members are responsible for coordinating washing and restacking of service items used. Consider cloth napkin rental.
 2. If choosing paper, choose goods made with recycled paper content first.
 3. If choosing plastic, choose plastic goods made with recycled plastic content, and consider the recyclability of the product following the event.
 4. Avoid Styrofoam.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Recycle as much of the event waste as possible.
- Consider donation of left-over food/supplies where a suitable donor can be identified.

GIVE-AWAYS

- Consider an environmental alternative with a message: ie: reusable water bottles filled with treats; environmental message t-shirts, etc.
- Make a donation in guests' name to a personally meaningful cause.

SERVICE PROJECTS

- Living in a green building provides a doorway into the exploration of many important environmental topics. Please contact the JRC Environmental Task Force for ideas!

TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL

- Encourage carpooling of guests to the event.
- Encourage guests to consider public transportation and provide them with information needed to do so.
- Consider the purchase of carbon offsets for travel needed to bring in guests.