

GREEN

your

B & B

**Valley
Waste
Resource**
Management





Bed & Breakfast Toolkit Overview

With the right information, it's easy to get started. Going green is great for the environment and great for business. Learn to embrace sustainable business practices while attracting eco-conscious travellers!

Bed & Breakfast Online Toolkit

Valley Waste Resource Management (VWRM)* has developed an online toolkit to help you reduce waste and improve the overall sustainability of your bed and breakfast. Visit the Business section of our website to download the complete toolkit, featuring resources specially designed to help you set and attain your bed and breakfast's environmental goals:

- **Environmental Policy Guide**
- **Waste Audit Guide**
- **Recycling Program Guide**
- **Green Procurement Policy Guide**
- **Backyard Composting Guide**
- **Marketing and Education Guide**
- **3R Checklist**

Are You a Waste Conscious Bed and Breakfast?

We hope that you will take action to help the Annapolis Valley tourism industry reduce waste and protect our planet. For more information about Valley Waste's bed and breakfast toolkit or to share your success story, please contact our education team at info@vwrn.com

Be sure to check out the 3R Guide

Wondering what to do with that unused appliance? VWRM website also offers information to help you find ways to reduce waste and reuse whenever possible. You can also search regional options for recycling and safe disposal of unwanted items.

*Special thanks to MMSB Newfoundland for allowing us to adapt their guide.



Environmental Policy

Make a Promise to Protect The Province, and Your Business

An environmental policy is a statement of your commitment to sustainability. It communicates your vision and long-term goals with specific consideration given to environmental sustainability.

Getting Started

Get it on paper. Make yourself a list of environmental initiatives currently underway at your bed and breakfast, followed by a list of your long-term environmental goals.

Assess the situation. When determining your goals, identify areas of operation, such as guest, food or administrative services, where environmental initiatives could be implemented.

Be realistic. Keep your policy short, simple and focused on commitments that are realistic, achievable and relevant to your bed and breakfast's activities and practices.

Use available resources: Learn how to implement new environmental programs that will be included in your environmental policy statement. Refer to VWRM's 'Green Your B&B' toolkit for information on possible initiatives for your bed and breakfast.





Setting Up Your Program

The following is a list of suggested commitments or principles that you may consider including in your bed and breakfast's environmental policy:

- **Be current:** Educate staff on relevant environmental issues.
- **Be informative.** Clearly lay out any initiatives or procedures such as a green procurement policy, or steps to reduce waste.
- **Be clear in your objectives.** Clearly define your organization's goals in terms of reducing waste: conserving the amount of water and energy used, minimizing the use of hazardous or toxic materials, etc.
- **Be compliant.** Follow applicable regional and provincial environmental regulations, as well as worker safety legislation.
- **Be involved.** Look for ways to work together and support local environmental actions within the community.
- **Establish a recycling program.** To learn more, refer to VWRM's Recycling Program Guide for Bed and Breakfasts.
- **Begin a composting program for kitchen and garden waste.** To learn more, refer to VWRM's Backyard Composting Guide for Bed and Breakfasts.

Marketing Your Policy

Your policy demonstrates social responsibility and commitment to reducing your business' impact on the environment. Given an increase in demand by visitors for environmentally-friendly accommodations, marketing your policy may enhance your bed and breakfast's public image and attract new clientele.

- **Sign and date your policy.** Post it in a central area for all new guests to see.
- **Educate.** Inform guests and the local community about your new policy.
- **Get it out there!** Proudly display your environmental policy on appropriate marketing and promotional materials such as your website, social media channels and print materials.

Sample Environmental Policy

_____ (name of bed and breakfast) recognizes environmental protection as one of our guiding principles and a key component in sound business performance. We are committed to providing a quality bed and breakfast accommodation facility, in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy environment for guests and minimizes our impact on the Earth. We will operate in compliance with all relevant federal, provincial and municipal environmental legislation. Accordingly, we have committed to the following environmental best practices:

- Incorporate environmental concerns and impacts into decision-making and activities.
- Promote environmental awareness among guests and encourage visitors to comply with initiatives.
- Educate and inform guests about relevant environmental issues that may affect their stay.
- Reduce waste by initiating recycling programs for paper, cardboard, beverage containers, plastic containers and other materials accepted for recycling in our region.
- Reduce waste by initiating a composting program for kitchen and yard organics. Start a backyard composter or donate these organics to community composting program.
- Purchase environmentally responsible products that have been selected based on criteria such as toxicity, durability, use of recycled or refurbished materials, reduced packaging and the ability to be recycled, refilled or re-furbished at the end of its useful life as well as reduced energy and/or water consumption.
- Promote efficient use of resources, including water and energy.
- Avoid unnecessary use of hazardous materials and seek alternatives whenever feasible.
- Regularly communicate information about environmental programs to guests and the public and encourage their support.
- Strive to continually improve performance by periodically reviewing our environmental policy.
- Visit www.vwrm.com for safe disposal options in our region for materials such as electronic and hazardous waste.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Bed and Breakfast Owner or Operator)



Waste Audit Guide

Weigh in on waste

Take the first step in sustainably managing your bed and breakfast's waste by examining the effectiveness of current practices, highlighting areas for improvement and potentially reducing waste disposal costs.

The Approach

There are three common approaches to conducting a waste audit. Factors such as building size, time, commitment and your waste reduction goals will help determine the most suitable approach. Your bed and breakfast may require one or all three of these methods – we'll cover each in more detail on the next page.



A waste audit identifies the types and amounts of waste produced at your bed and breakfast. It will establish baseline data, help set priorities and measure the success of any new waste reduction and diversion initiatives.

Records Examination

A review of your purchasing records, current recycling practices (if any), and waste disposal services and contracts.

Walk-Through

A visual assessment of your activities and waste generation. Focus on waste-generating activities, equipment, and current waste removal practices.

Waste-Sort

Sort and weigh a sample collection of the waste materials over a specified period of time. Identify each type of waste material and provide a quantified estimate of the organization's total waste generation.

Records Examination

- Gather and examine all records regarding the financials of waste collection and recycling –including equipment costs for anything such as waste or recycling bins and bags; revenue from recycling programs, etc.
- Use this information and apply it to make business decisions regarding purchasing, service contracts, etc.

Walk-Through

- Schedule the walk-through after guests leave to get an accurate representation of the amount of waste generated.
- Observe the types of waste generated. Use the ‘Waste Audit Worksheet’ to record estimated weights and quantities of waste items.

Waste-Sort

- Define the time required to give yourself an accurate representation of the amount of waste generated. For example: if you collect waste daily, you may choose to assess waste for 5 days to get a true sample.
- Assign and label containers for sorting as needed: paper, cardboard, glass, beverage containers, plastics, metal, and food waste. Weigh the empty containers before sorting.
- Collect and sort the gathered waste into the proper containers. Weigh sorted materials in the ‘Waste Audit Worksheet’ (don’t forget to subtract the weight of the container!)
- Continue the waste collection and sorting process for the predetermined period of time.

This is valuable data for your bed

and breakfast. Make your waste reduction strategy based on the findings of your audit. For example, if you notice large amounts of plastic waste originating from guest rooms, consider providing reusable glasses, coffee mugs, real cutlery and refillable containers rather than disposable options.

Example: The Stewardship Bed and Breakfast completed a waste sort every Monday for 5 weeks during the operational season. Throughout the five waste sorts, 10 kg of organic waste was collected, 8 kg of which originated from the kitchen. The Stewardship Bed and Breakfast was operational for 135 days last year. Using the waste formula, it was determined that approximately 270 kg of organic waste was produced annually. Based on these results, a backyard composting program was initiated to focus on reducing food waste from the kitchen.

Weight of organic waste for 1 year (135 days)
= [10 kg/5 days] X 135 days = 270 kg/year.

The Valley Waste region include a number of visitor accommodations In Kings and Annapolis Counties which service thousands of visitors annually. 20% of the waste collected curbside by weight is recycling. The Annapolis Valley has a 40% diversion rate.

Waste Audit Worksheet

Complete a new table for each day of the waste audit. Once you have the data collected, use the waste formula on the table below to calculate the annual weight of each waste category and total waste. The worksheet will show you the physical location(s) where you create the most (or least) waste for each category. This information is not needed for the calculations; however it may be useful when determining where to start with your waste reduction goals.

Waste Categories	Areas	Weight (kg)	Total Weight
Food Waste	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Plastic	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Glass	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Paper	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Cardboard/boxboard	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Other	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		
Total Weight	office		
	guest rooms		
	kitchen		
	common areas		

Waste Formula:

$$\left[\frac{\text{___ Total weight of waste material (kg)}}{\text{___ # of waste audit days}} \right] \times \text{___ Total workdays per year} = \text{___ Total weight of material per year (kg)}$$



Recycling is a process that transforms used items into new products, saving energy and raw materials while keeping useful waste out of the landfill.

Recycling Programs

Give Recycling a Warm Welcome.

Reducing and reusing are the first steps in establishing sustainable practices at your bed and breakfast. But recycling also plays a significant role in diverting waste from landfills.

Getting Started

Use the results of your waste audit.

Determine how much of the waste you're currently generating that could be recycled.

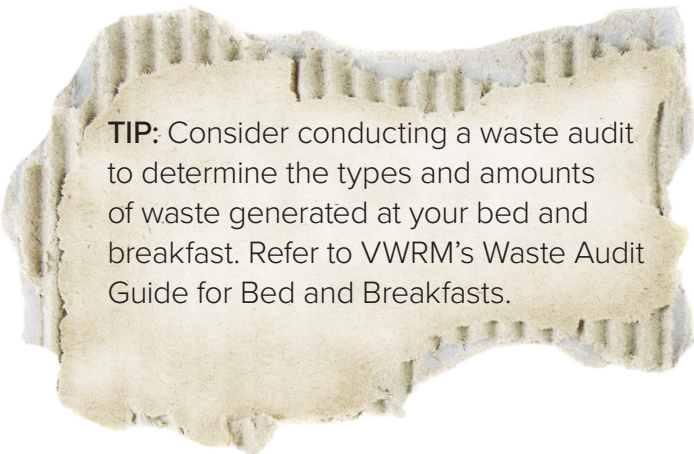
See What's Available

- **Determine which materials can be recycled in your area.** Choose what's financially feasible and most appropriate for your bed and breakfast. Options may vary depending on your community or waste management region
- **Beverage container recycling.** Ask your nearest Green Depot about drop-off services or if pick-up service is available.
- **Paper and container recycling.** Visit the Valley Waste website about curbside collection and other recycling

programs in your region.

- **Do as much as you can.**

Visit www.vwrm.com or www.divert.ca to find safe disposal options for electronic waste and household hazardous wastes such as paints, CFL light bulbs, batteries and household cleaners.



TIP: Consider conducting a waste audit to determine the types and amounts of waste generated at your bed and breakfast. Refer to VWRM's Waste Audit Guide for Bed and Breakfasts.



Setting Up Your Program

- Choose appropriate locations to place recycling bins throughout your bed and breakfast—guest rooms, common areas, kitchen and office.
- Choose a location for storing recycling blue bags such as the garage, basement or kitchen; empty smaller bins from guest rooms and other locations regularly.
- Post signage on or beside each bin. Add sorting guides in rooms explaining which items are recyclable, compost or garbage.
- If necessary, create a regular recycling schedule for collection and drop-off at your nearest Green Depot.

Promoting Your Program

- Get it out there! Educate your staff or other family members about your recycling programs and provide a list of accepted materials as well as any other necessary information.
- Show it off! Conduct a walkthrough of the building with staff or family members to ensure they are clear on the recycling program, where the bins are located and their individual responsibilities.

- Keep it up! Continually communicate information about your recycling programs to guests by including the information on print materials in your guest rooms.

Maintaining Your Program

- Be critical. Ask guests for feedback on your recycling system; try an electronic survey or comment card.
- Be proactive. Make necessary program changes based on feedback, and inform guests and staff of any updates.
- Track results. Measure your program's success annually by evaluating and comparing recycling and garbage volumes.

Establishing a recycling program at your accommodation may result in a few

initial challenges; however, recycling will soon become second nature to you, your staff and your guests. By initiating more sustainable practices, your accommodation is demonstrating a true commitment to the environment and becoming a role model for other businesses in your community.



Green Procurement Policy Guide

Make buying green part of your daily routine.

A green procurement policy demonstrates your commitment to sustainability by considering the impact of purchasing decisions and minimizing negative impacts on the environment.

Getting Started

To begin, use the tips and ideas in this toolkit to choose the areas that require healthier, environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Household cleaners, toiletries and food services are great places to start cleaning up your act. Research alternatives, ask questions and understand how products and services may negatively impact human health and the environment.

Implementing your policy will become second nature as you find reliable “green” products and services that are suitable for your bed and breakfast.

Creating Your Policy

Keep your green procurement policy brief, and sign and date the document at the bottom. Proudly display your green procurement policy on appropriate marketing and promotional materials like your website, social media channels and print materials.

Consider the following guidelines to help you write your green procurement policy:

When possible, we:

- Consider all stages of a product’s life cycle: production, distribution, consumption and disposal.
- Purchase products that are durable, reusable, recyclable and/or compostable.

- Purchase products that are sustainably produced and contain post-consumer recycled content.
- Purchase products that are non-toxic, biodegradable and have natural ingredients.
- Purchase products that minimize toxins, pollution and hazards to people and the environment.
- Purchase products that conserve water, energy and reduce carbon emissions.

When purchasing items, look for “green” certifications such as:



Cradle-to-cradle
www.c2ccertified.com



Energy Star
www.energystar.nrcan.gc.ca



Forest Stewardship Council
www.fsc.org



Green Guard
www.greenguard.org



Green Seal
www.greenseal.org



Eco-logo
www.ecologo.org

- Seek alternative solutions to existing cleaning methods.
- Seek local products and services before looking outside the province and/or country.
- Seek product vendors that reuse or recycle products at the end of their useful life through “take-back” or Extended Producer Responsibility programs.

Benefits of a Green Procurement Policy

- Reduces waste going to the landfill.
- Reduces your carbon footprint.
- Offers potential cost savings.
- Improves public image by demonstrating your commitment to the health and safety of the environment and your guests.
- Creates an opportunity to influence positive change by sharing policies with other businesses.
- Contributes toward creating a demand for more sustainable products.

TIP: Be aware of greenwashing: the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service. Read labels, ask questions and investigate companies to ensure you select the products with the least negative

<p>Around The B&B</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use natural, biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products such as baking soda and vinegar. • Make your own cleaning rags by cutting up old bed sheets and towels. • Purchase plant-based biodegradable laundry detergent or make your own. • Seek materials and products that conserve water, energy and reduce carbon emissions when doing renovations or upgrades. • Purchase low or zero VOC paints.
<p>In The Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace office supplies only when all other options have been used. • Purchase office supplies in bulk and with little packaging. • Choose office supplies made from recycled content. • Purchase 100% post-consumer recycled printer paper. • Use soy-based ink for printing.
<p>In The Kitchen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase local food with little or no packaging. • Purchase supplies in containers that can be reused. • Purchase organic and fair-trade coffee, teas and food. • Use drip coffee or french presses rather than coffee pods. • Rent dishware and cutlery for special events and occasions, instead of purchasing disposable options. • Look for compostable cutlery and dishware (typically corn-based) if disposable options are necessary. Note: items must be added to a compost bin to decompose properly. • Provide cloth napkins to guests. • Seek paper products made from 100% post-consumer recycled paper, if necessary.
<p>In The Guest Rooms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in bedding and linens that are made from chemical-free, natural and sustainable materials such as organic cotton, bamboo and hemp. • Consider buying good quality, used furniture. • Outfit guest bathrooms with low-flow shower heads and low-flush toilets. • Purchase toilet paper that is made from 100% post-consumer recycled paper.
<p>Around The Garden</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase natural fertilizers, such as compost, instead of chemical products. • Grow plants from seed instead of purchasing plants in plastic pots. • Purchase native and hardy plants for your garden that will stand up to weeds, pests and weather.



Backyard Composting Guide

Help grow your garden and your business.

Composting is nature's way of recycling organic waste by breaking material down naturally, mimicking the earth's natural processes. By creating the optimal environment for decomposing organisms in the soil, our organic waste is converted into nutrient-rich compost.

Getting Started

Starting a composting program at your bed and breakfast will significantly reduce the amount of waste you send to the landfill. To decide what composting system will work best for your bed and breakfast, you must determine how much organic waste you produce.

This guide includes tips and suggestions to help you set up a composting program that works for your bed and breakfast.

Choose a Bin

Choose a bin that works for the amount of organic waste you produce. A standard plastic or wooden bin may be preferable for a small urban yard, whereas in a larger garden, a three-bin composter or a second bin may be required to accommodate extra yard waste.

Call Valley Waste at 902 679 1325 to purchase a backyard composter or visit <https://www.vwrm.com/education-outreach/resources/> for backyard compost bin plans.

Did You Know?

Organic material accounts for 45 percent of all waste generated in the Annapolis Valley.




Choose a Location

On Your Property:

- Place your compost bin in a sunny area with good drainage to encourage fast decomposition and prevent excess moisture from accumulating during the wet season.
- Place the bin in a convenient location where it is accessible year-round.
- Turn the soil in the location where the compost bin will be placed; cover the ground with a layer of small branches and then place the bin on top.

In Your Kitchen:

- Place a small, covered container in your kitchen for collecting food scraps. Reuse a bucket or an ice cream container to collect scraps. Collection containers can also be purchased from a hardware store.
- The amount of waste you produce will determine how often your kitchen container needs to be emptied. Once or twice a week is usually sufficient.



TIP: To speed up decomposition, cut up materials before adding them to your bin.

Adding Organic Waste

- Organic waste can be found in your kitchen, garden and throughout your home. It is important to maintain a balance of green and brown materials in your compost bin. A 50/50 ratio by weight (not volume) is preferred. Below is a list of greens and browns that you can compost from your bed and breakfast's kitchen and yard.

Greens:

- Fruit and vegetable peels and scraps
- Crushed eggshells
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Tea bags and leaves
- Fresh grass clippings
- Houseplant trimmings
- Browns:
- Rice, oats and other grains
- Dried corn stalks
- Pasta (without sauce or oil)
- Peanut shells
- Bread and other baked goods
- Paper products such as newspaper, paper towels, toilet paper rolls and cereal boxes
- Dried leaves
- Dried, untreated grass clippings
- Non-diseased plants
- Twigs and small branches
- Woodchips and sawdust (from untreated wood)

TIP: To cut down on odours, empty your kitchen collection bin regularly and rinse the container each time it's emptied or line the bin with newspaper.



Items to Avoid

Although the materials listed below are organic, they may cause problems such as odours, pests or unnecessary toxins.

- All meat products
- Fish and shellfish
- Bones
- Fat, grease, oils and sauces
- All dairy products
- Weeds gone to seed
- Diseased plants
- Dog and cat waste
- Plants treated with pesticide
- Wood treated with chemicals
- Charcoal

Maintaining the Pile

- Add layers of browns and greens to the bin in equal weight. Finish with a layer of brown material on top to minimize odors and keep flies away.
- Keep the compost pile as moist as a wrung-out sponge. Your compost will get most of the moisture it needs from green material. If it gets too wet, add more brown material; if it gets too dry, add more green material or simply sprinkle with water.
- Keep the compost pile aerated by turning the material inside the bin each time you add new organics. Place a shovel or pitchfork next to the bin to serve as a reminder.
- Help initiate the composting process by adding a few shovels of garden soil or finished compost the first time you add organic material; mix it all together.

TIP: Collect and store fallen leaves in a covered container next to the compost bin. Cover with a layer of leaves after each time you add new material or turn your bin.



Composting with the Seasons

- **FALL:** Harvest any compost to make room for material to be added throughout the winter.
- **WINTER:** Continue adding organic waste. Even if the pile freezes, decomposition will begin again when the temperature rises.
- **SPRING:** Start turning the pile again to add oxygen. Add brown material to absorb extra moisture.
- **SUMMER:** Maximize productivity during our short warm season by turning the pile frequently and adding layers of browns and greens.

Using the Finished Compost

- Finished compost is dark and crumbly and has an earthy smell. You will know your bin is ready to harvest when the materials inside take this form and none of the original material is visible.
- Harvest finished compost from the bottom of the bin when it is ready or start a new compost pile while waiting or the materials in the original bin to fully decompose.

Uses for finished compost:

- Mix compost into the soil of new lawns and garden beds.
- Mix with potting soil for use in potted houseplants.

- Use as mulch around trees, shrubs and plants.
- Use as a conditioner to help aerate clay soils.
- Give some to a friend or gardener.
- Use as a top dressing on established flower beds, gardens and lawns.

Why Compost?

Benefits to your bed and breakfast:

- Replaces the need for chemical fertilizers, pesticides and excess watering—saving you time and money.
- Helps your lawn, garden and indoor plants thrive.
- Enriches the soil with nutrient-rich organic matter, improves heat and moisture retention, and promotes the growth of healthy, pest-resistant plants and lawns.



Benefits to your community:

- Lowers waste disposal costs for collecting and transporting organic waste.
- Provides a positive example for other tourism operators in the community by managing organic waste in an environmentally-friendly way.

Benefits to the environment:

- Diverts 40 percent of your total waste from the landfill.
- Requires less land for waste disposal.
- Reduces methane gas and leachate production.
- Protects the air, water and soil.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if my compost starts to smell bad?

If your compost pile has an unpleasant odour, it's either not getting enough oxygen or it's too wet. To eliminate unpleasant odours, turn it thoroughly and frequently (to add oxygen), mix in a few shovels of garden soil, and add brown material to absorb extra moisture.

What should I do if my compost pile is not composting?

- Check the basics. Turn the pile frequently and add a balance of greens and browns.
- Make sure the bin is located in a sunny area with good drainage.
- If the pile is too wet, balance the moisture by adding brown material (e.g., shredded paper or dried leaves) and turn the pile thoroughly after adding new content.
- If the pile is too dry, add green material (e.g., food scraps or green grass clippings) or sprinkle with water if necessary.
- If the materials inside the bin don't seem to be heating up, the pile could be too small. Continue adding brown and green material to increase the volume.





TIP: A compost pile that is turned often and given the proper ingredients will break down more quickly than one that is not maintained.

What can I do with my grass clippings?

You can add fresh grass clippings to your compost pile; just be sure to balance the fresh green grass with brown material or add the grass only after it has turned brown. If you accumulate more grass clippings than your compost bin can accommodate, try Grass Cycling. Cutting your lawn frequently and only cutting the top third of the grass blade lets you leave clippings on the ground where they can return nutrients back into the lawn.



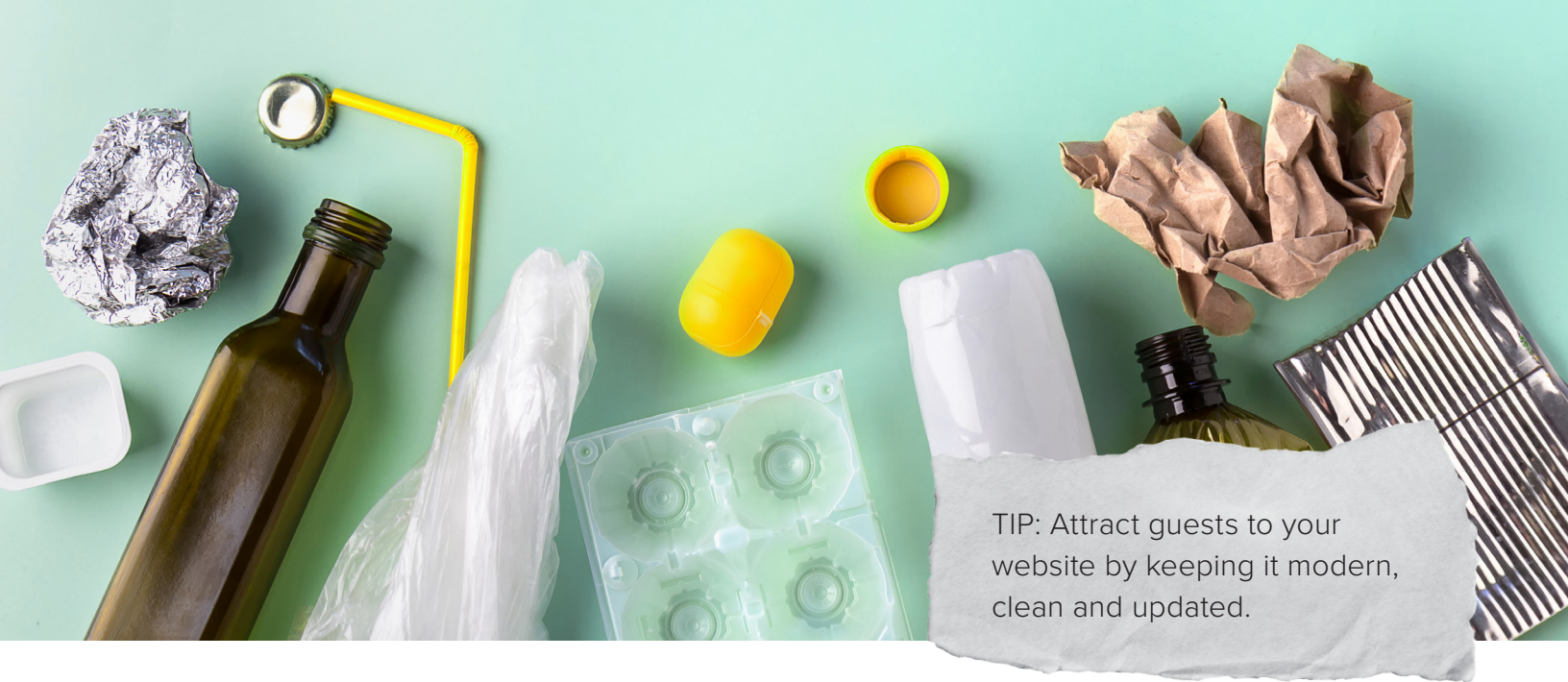
What can I do with all my leaves?

Collect and store fallen leaves throughout the year to add to your bin and help maintain the proper balance of browns and greens. If you still have leaves left over, you can start a leaf mould by storing leaves in a bin or covered pile and allowing them to break down slowly over a 1-3 year period.

Does composting attract pests?

Setting up a compost bin will not attract new pest populations to your property. If pests are currently a problem in your area, the following tips will help you set up and maintain a pest-free compost pile:

- Do not add meat, fish, bones, oil, fat or dairy products to your bin.
- Locate your bin away from things that offer food or shelter to pests such as bird feeders, open water, wood piles, shrubbery and sheds.
- Cover exposed food waste with a layer of brown material.
- Keep your compost pile moist. Pests are more inclined to nest in a dry compost bin.
- Place your bin at least 12 inches away from fences, decks, or buildings.
- Turn your compost pile regularly. A regularly disturbed pile is unattractive to pests.
- Harvest finished compost at the bottom of the bin; this will discourage nesting.
- Place galvanized wire mesh under your bin to prevent burrowing.



TIP: Attract guests to your website by keeping it modern, clean and updated.

Marketing & Education Guide

Spread the 'green' word.

Tourism operators around the province understand the importance of going green. Increasingly, consumers expect businesses to demonstrate an environmental commitment—and the tourism industry is listening and responding by making positive environmental changes. By implementing and promoting green initiatives, you will help your business grow.

Why Share Your Story?

- Improves your bed and breakfast's public image and reputation.
- Increases general awareness about your business.
- Helps your bed and breakfast stand apart from others in the area.
- Helps you attract a new clientele of eco-savvy travelers.
- Assists you in meeting the expectations of guests who come from regions where environmental sustainability is common.
- Provides a positive example for other businesses in your community and throughout the province.

How to Market Your Green Initiatives

Take Advantage of Your Website

- Highlight your bed and breakfasts environmental actions and commitments. Use headings to promote this section of your website or include a link on your homepage.
- Make your list of green initiatives easy to find, read and understand.
- Publish visitor comments on your website that pertain to your environmental commitment.
- Consider posting pictures of new environmental initiatives on your website such as harvesting your compost bin or completing a waste audit.

Incorporate Social Media

Get on there. Create Facebook and Twitter accounts for if your bed and breakfast does not already have them. Keep in mind that many guests are using social media sources to plan their trips and to recommend businesses to other travellers.

Get active. Start a daily or weekly “green tip” for travelers and post interesting links on your social media sites. Keep your accounts up-to-date with photos and activities highlighting your initiatives.

Keep a dialogue. Engage people through social media to gain more online followers. For example, you can host a contest for people to post their favourite eco-friendly travel tip to enter to win a free night’s stay at your B&B. Hire staff who are internet and social media savvy to assist you with your online presence.

Explore Online Resources

Put your name out there. Increase your online reputation by encouraging your guests to post reviews about your bed and breakfast through reputable travel websites.

Collect feedback. Online surveys are a great way to collect feedback from your guests. Include questions about your environmental initiatives and ask for recommendations.

Develop Print Materials

Eco-friendly takeaways. Incorporate your environmental commitments in your print materials such as brochures and business cards. Print with soy or vegetable based ink on recycled paper and include a small blurb about your bed and breakfasts environmental initiatives.

Create a Green Experience

Give them what they’re looking for.

Recognize that many guests come to the Annapolis Valley to enjoy outdoor activities and appreciate our natural beauty; create a welcoming space in your garden for your guests to enjoy by providing comfortable seating and shaded picnic areas.

Celebrate the environment. Keep a calendar of environmental celebrations and display them for guests to see. Consider planning activities around occasions such as:

- Global Recycling Day (March 18)
- Compost Awareness Week (May)
- Earth Hour (March) & Earth Day (April 22)
- Waste Reduction Week (October)

Give guests something to talk about.

Engage your guests in conversation and allow them to get involved in environmental programs that your bed and breakfast offers. Visitors may be interested in learning about your garden or how your composting setup works. Ask guests for recommendations, feedback and testimonials.

Create Community Partnerships

There’s strength in numbers. Seek like-minded businesses and organizations in the community and cross-promote your operations.



Greening Your Brand

Build Brand Awareness

Good brand awareness for your bed and breakfast is important for making a lasting, positive impression. Giving your bed and breakfast's brand an environmental theme highlights your commitment to the environment and can help attract new guests. Promote ideas that include nature, peace and care for the environment in their messaging.

Get Certified

Participate in a certification course. The Gros Morne Institute of Sustainable Tourism (www.gmist.ca) offers relevant courses for tourism operators to increase their service offerings.

Apply for a green label. Please note: not all programs listed below will be applicable to your bed and breakfast.

Green Key

This process begins with an online audit of environmental initiatives in a variety of categories. After examining the results, businesses are awarded between one and five Green Keys. There is an opportunity for business owners to earn more keys as they "unlock" ways to improve on their sustainable initiatives. (greenkeyglobal.com)

Green Seal

This certification applies not only to the accommodations industry but also to products and services all over the world. Therefore, it is easily recognized by many consumers. Receiving a Green Seal involves audits, on-site visits, and ongoing monitoring in categories from hazardous waste management to environmental

purchasing. (greenseal.org)

STEP (Sustainable Tourism Education Program, with Eco-Certification)

STEP is a program focused solely on encouraging positive sustainable behaviours by operators in the tourism industry. This is achieved through education made available to business owners or through a certification process. The more stars an operator wishes to achieve, the more stringent an evaluation they must complete. (sustainabletravel.org)

LEED Certification

A rating system pertaining to the structure of a building and how it meets various structural criteria in terms of energy and water use, resource use and air quality. This program is best suited for brand new buildings or those undergoing renovations. (cagbc.org)

Put it out there. Proudly display any green certification that your bed and breakfast has earned.

Be careful. Before applying for any certifications, do some research into the organization and make sure your business is a good fit. Beware of misleading your guests regarding the environmental practices at your bed and breakfast. Do not make promises you can't keep and be cautious of exaggerating your initiatives. Guests will see through this tactic and lose confidence in your commitment to the environment –word of mouth is a powerful advertising tool, use it to your advantage.

Educate Your Guests

Get off to a green start. When sending reservation confirmations, include a note about your environmental programs so your guests will be aware of your policies before arriving.

Repetition is key. Strategically place signage throughout your bed and breakfast, reminding guests of your environmental programs and policies. Post “green” reminders around the bed and breakfast to prompt guests to perform small actions to help the environment, such as:

- A note by light switches asking guests to turn off the lights when leaving a room.
- A note in the bathroom asking guests to conserve water and reuse towels.
- Label recycling bins and garbage cans to explain what goes where.





3R Checklist

You and your guests can sleep soundly.

The 3Rs—Reduce, Reuse and Recycle—are a hierarchy that should be followed in this order. Many people focus mainly on recycling when we should first look for ways to reduce and reuse. Since recycling depends largely on what services are available in your region, reducing and reusing will make the biggest difference to minimizing both the amount of waste produced and the costs associated with waste disposal. Use this checklist to see how well your bed and breakfast is reducing waste, conserving energy and water and helping to protect our environment.

Around the B&B

At our bed and breakfast we:

- Have an environmental policy (see page 3 - Environmental Policy Guide for Bed and Breakfasts).
 - Have environmental purchasing policies (See page 11 - Green Procurement Policy Guide for Bed and Breakfasts).
 - Conduct periodic waste audits (see page 6 - Waste Audit Guide for Bed and Breakfasts). Call our education team if you need help getting started with your audit.
- Notify guests of environmental events and celebrations in the local area.
 - Use natural, biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products.
 - Turn off taps tightly and repair leaks.
 - Choose water conserving appliances such as low-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads.
 - Wash linens in cold water whenever possible.
 - Dry laundry outside on a clothesline when possible rather than using the dryer.

- ❑ Turn off lights and unplug electronics and appliances when not in use.
- ❑ Turn off air conditioning and open windows on warm days.
- ❑ Install programmable thermostats and motion sensor lighting where possible.
- ❑ Choose energy efficient electronics, appliances and supplies such as compact fluorescent light bulbs.
- ❑ Choose energy efficient and eco-friendly upgrades such as adding insulation, weather stripping windows and doors and using natural or recycled building materials during renovations.
- ❑ Promote activities and attractions that are within walking or biking distance for guests.
- ❑ Have a recycling program for used beverage containers and other items that are recyclable in our region.
- ❑ Dispose of hazardous waste properly.
- ❑ Provide a copy of the daily newspaper for guests to share.
- ❑ Provide guests with computer access, allowing them to read news online and research local sites, festivals and activities.
- ❑ Use dry erase boards for staff and/or guest notices.

In the Guest Rooms

At our bed and breakfast we:

- ❑ Encourage guests to use the water jug or water cooler instead of providing bottled water.
- ❑ Place cups and mugs upside down on cloth napkins to reduce waste from plastic wrapping or paper doilies.
- ❑ Provide ceramic coffee mugs and reusable drinking glasses instead of disposable cups.
- ❑ Provide reusable shopping bags, travel mugs, and water bottles for guests to use during their stay.
- ❑ Provide recycling bins in each guest room.
- ❑ Sort and divert all recyclables from guest room waste.
- ❑ Use products with recycled content such as toilet paper.
- ❑ Provide refillable soap and shampoo dispensers instead of single use bottles.
- ❑ Encourage guests to reuse towels and linens.
- ❑ Encourage guests to turn off lights, heating and cooling systems and appliances when not in use.



In the Offices

At our bed and breakfast we:

- Email invoices and confirmations to guests.
- Email surveys to guests after their stay.
- Set printer default to print double-sided.
- Send and receive faxes electronically.
- Print and copy only what is necessary.
- Bookmark important websites and keep electronic files instead of printing documents.
- Purchase energy efficient office equipment.
- Print with soy or vegetable based ink.
- Turn off computers, monitors and lights when leaving the office.
- Reuse packing supplies such as envelopes, boxes, paper and plastic wrap for mailing and shipping.
- Reuse old file folders and binders.
- Reuse one-side-still-blank paper for notes.
- Use an undated, erasable calendar.
- Use rechargeable batteries and battery chargers for digital cameras, flashlights and other electronic devices.
- Recycle paper.
- Purchase reusable office supplies such as reusable printer cartridges and refillable pens.
- Repair items before discarding them as garbage.

- Purchase items that contain recycled or recyclable material such as recycled printer paper.
- Donate or recycle unwanted office supplies and equipment.
- Have an ink cartridge recycling collection bin.
- Dispose of electronic waste (e-waste) properly.

In the Kitchen

At our bed and breakfast we...

- Use reusable coffee mugs, glasses, dishes and cutlery and avoid disposable options.
- Purchase food and supplies in bulk such as large containers of yogurt, juice and condiments rather than individual serving containers.
- Purchase food and supplies with minimal packaging.
- Purchase local food when possible.
- Purchase fair trade coffee and tea.
- Buy coffee cream, coffee and sugar in bulk and avoid individually packaged items.
- Keep a water jug in the fridge or use a water cooler to avoid running the tap and using bottled water.
- Use cloth napkins and dish towels.
- Purchase recycled and unbleached paper towels and napkins.

- ❑ Use reusable shopping bags for grocery and supply shopping.
- ❑ Run the dishwasher only when full.
- ❑ Use reusable filters in coffee machines or compost paper filters.
- ❑ Donate leftover food to local shelters or food banks.
- ❑ Compost organic waste including fruit and vegetable scraps, paper towels, tea bags and coffee grinds and filters, or donate organic waste to a local farmer.



Around the Garden

At our bed and breakfast we:

- ❑ Compost garden organics such as leaves, grass and garden trimmings.
- ❑ Use natural fertilizers and avoid chemical herbicides and pesticides.
- ❑ Grow some of our own food.
- ❑ Reuse dishwater that can be used in the garden to water plants.
- ❑ Have a rainwater collection bin for indoor and outdoor plants.
- ❑ Purchase or produce natural fertilizers such as compost instead of chemical products.
- ❑ Spray plants with soapy water or vinegar rather than using pesticides or herbicides to get rid of garden pests.
- ❑ Select native and hardy plants for our garden that are more resistant to weeds, pests and weather.
- ❑ Grow plants from seed instead of purchasing plants in plastic pots.
- ❑ Plant flowers in unused household items, such as old old bathtubs and sinks to add character.
- ❑ Provide bicycles for guest use.
- ❑ Provide reusable picnic supplies such as containers and water bottles for guest use.

Your 3R Checklist

How will you achieve your environmental goals? Complete the worksheet below with specific actions that you will take within the next year. Use the tips provided in this guide and keep yourself on track by regularly referring to your list.

In the next six months we plan to:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

In the next year we plan to:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____