

Greenest race in N.America gets greener

Biodegradable food containers become mulch

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AUSTIN (KXAN) - The Austin Marathon wrapped up Sunday, but one thing is left behind a lot of trash. Since organizers of this year's marathon were touting the race as the "Greenest Race in North America," they will be collecting tens of thousands of plastic bottles and aluminum cans to be recycled.

In addition, Texas Disposal Systems will be composting some 30,000 biodegradable food containers from the race at their facility Monday. In about 90 days, those containers will biodegrade into mulch that will be sold to be used in gardens.

Some of the other green features include:

- Recycling stations at the finish line and the Austin Marathon and Half Marathon Expo
- Gutter Buddies – shields on city gutters to keep debris from going into Lady Bird Lake
- Composting for food waste at the finish line
- 100 percent online race registration – eliminating paper registration forms
- Austin Rowing Center kayakers will retrieve items discarded in Lady Bird Lake
- Caritas will receive any leftover food from the finish line's food service stations
- All badges for race operations made from recycled plastic (more than 1,000 total)
- Race website hosted by company using wind power for operations
- Cardboard-only dumpsters were full with 10,000 pounds of boxes, used to hold everything from water and PowerAde to t-shirts and race medals
- Recycling bins from Keep Austin Beautiful were filled with more than 13,000 plastic water bottles, totaling 4,375 pounds of plastic recycled on race day
- Finishers in the half-marathon took home an organic cotton t-shirt; the 7,000 tees saved approximately 2,334 pounds of pesticide
- Three Biodiesel and two solar-powered generators saved approximately 100 gallons of gas on race day
- Ten official race vehicles and trucks used Bio-diesel fuel
- No-idle zones were enforced for all race vehicles, saving approximately 18 gallons of gas and 95 pounds of carbon dioxide during race day
- Race restrooms were stocked with 1,500 rolls of toilet paper made with recycled content
- All 250 Austin Outhouse units were serviced with Dyna-Bact Environmental Toilet Deodorizer (a non-toxic alternative to traditional harsh chemicals)
- More than 500 articles of discarded clothing were donated to local charities instead of being thrown away