

Facilities & Services  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



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# Illini Football Tailgate Recycling Event

In the world of college football, where fans gather to cheer on their teams, the University of Illinois took on a special mission to make these celebrations more eco-friendly. As cars rolled into the tailgating lots near Memorial Stadium for the afternoon’s game against Florida Atlantic University, an organized effort was underway to ensure that the fan experience also left a positive impact on the environment.

A win on the field was matched by a win in the recycling column. More than 1,000 pounds of cans and bottles were diverted from the landfill to recycling.

“Events with tens of thousands of visitors produce a sizable quantity of waste,” said Daphne Hulse, zero waste coordinator. “Athletic events are also unique in that not only are we hosting students, faculty, and staff from our own university, but also rivals from other schools and visitors from across the state and country.”

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Lot 31 featured a green recycling dumpster placed next to an F&S tent. Volunteers, dressed in “Be Orange, Go Green” shirts, were there to inform fans on appropriate recyclables and putting their bagged recyclables into the dumpster. Additionally, there were smaller recycling bins placed in the Grange Grove area for fans who were on their way to Memorial Stadium.





Each group was given a blue bag that was to be filled with their recyclables. To encourage fans to participate, those who disposed of their recyclables in the Lot 31 dumpster received a limited-edition orange Block I t-shirt.



Hulse is already looking forward to the next events to help the university become more green.

“Holding events such as tailgate recycling also allows us to view tailgate waste management through a boots-on-the-ground approach: where is waste produced, how is it produced, what is produced, and how can we divert it towards recycling as opposed to the landfill? We can then take our lessons learned and determine how best to integrate the approach within existing operations. The goal is to provide the



necessary infrastructure and resources in a convenient manner, so that the act of recycling becomes a natural habit to tailgaters.”

If you are interested in signing up as a volunteer for the next recycling tailgate on November 11, please do so here: <https://forms.illinois.edu/sec/1155241583>.



Organizers and volunteers welcomed questions and requests for more information. They expressed their hope that this green initiative would continue to make a positive impact, not only on the game day experience but also on the broader campus, as fans and organizers collaborated in their efforts to protect the environment.

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