



A Newsletter for the Eco-Conscious Athlete

From Happy Planet Running

We can make your race leave no trace!

happyplanetrunning.com



Issue #6 – December 17, 2025

In This Issue

- Sustainable Race Updates:
 - *Less Waste, More Thanks at Ann Arbor's Turkey Trot*
 - *A Festive Finish to the Zero Waste Season: Holiday Hustle Edition*
- Frequently Asked Question:
 - *What does HPR do with wax-lined paper products?*
- Latest Sustainability News:
 - *What's Changing for Waxed Paper Cup Recycling*
 - *Nature's Christmas Lights are Back*
- Zero Waste Fun Fact:
 - *Why Wax-Paper Cups Weren't Historically Recyclable*
- Get Involved:
 - *Work with HPR at an upcoming race!*



Recent HPR Updates

- The RF Events annual [Ann Arbor Turkey Trot](#) served up a cold but cheerful Thanksgiving Day packed with holiday spirit. Costumed runners, or those bundled up to stay warm, took on the 5K or 1K before warming up with well-earned hot chocolate and cookies. Turkey Tom and Santa made the rounds for photos while our Green Team hustled behind the scenes, sorting waste quickly and efficiently. We processed 102 lbs. of waste with an **impressive diversion rate of 99.4%**, though one All Waste box was a casualty to the wind. A festive race with a sustainable finish, now that's something to be thankful for! [Read the full sustainability report here.](#)



It's never too early for holiday fun!

- The 2025 Zero Waste racing season crossed the finish line with a festive flair at the RF Events [Holiday Hustle](#) in Dexter. Runners braved a cold morning half marathon and an equally chill afternoon 5K. While runners were off racing, the Green Team stayed warm by sorting all the race waste. From cups to plenty of hand warmers (which are

recycled at [TerraCycle](#)) this event generated 161.8 lbs. of waste, but only sent 0.4 lbs to landfill. **That's an incredible diversion rate of 99.8%!** Now that's a way to wrap up the Zero Waste season. [Read the full sustainability report here.](#)



Recycling is in the Christmas Spirit!

For more about what we do, [check out our full set of sustainability reports](#), which covers every event we've done since 2017. They're good reads!

Check out our [Instagram](#) or [TikTok](#) for frequent event updates and content!



This Issue's /FAQ: Waxed Paper Cups

- ***Q: What does HPR do with waxed paper cups?***

- A: Waxed paper cups (e.g. Dixie, Starbucks, etc.) are not yet recyclable in our area. That's why HPR takes them to the [MSU Recycling Facility](#) in East Lansing to be recycled. At each event, waxed cups are sorted separately from single-stream recyclables and stored until the next trip to (or though) East Lansing for drop-off. One of the extra steps HPR takes to be as sustainable as possible.
- But this extra step may soon be a thing of the past! A new recycling initiative aims to make waxed paper cups recyclable through curbside pickup in the future. Read more about this exciting update below!



The Latest in Sustainability News

- **Waste Management Approves Recycling of Paper and Plastic Cups**: Waste Management (WM), North America's largest recycler, has announced a major addition to what can go in your recycling bin. Paper cups and polypropylene (PP) plastic cups are being added to their list of accepted recyclable material. That means coffee cups, fast food cups, and other wax-lined cups may soon avoid landfill altogether. While these cups are already accepted for recycling at certain facilities, like the [MSU Recycling Facility](#) in East Lansing, WM is now working to make them recyclable in curbside pickup. To make this possible, WM is investing \$1.4 billion in new recycling infrastructure across North America, partnering with industry leaders like Starbucks, The Recycling Partnership, How2Recycle, municipalities, and the National League of

Cities to build awareness and capacity. WM aims to have all its single-stream recycling facilities accept paper and PP cups by mid-2026, making recycling easier and more accessible. To learn more about WM's decision to expand its recycling efforts, click this [link](#).



- **'Glow in the Dark' Snails Return to Home Island: French Polynesia is celebrating the season in truly magical fashion.** More than 7,000 "glow in the dark" snails have successfully been reintroduced to the wild, marking a major win for conservation. This critically endangered Partula snail has faced decades of habitat loss and has struggled to survive since the 1980s. Thanks to dedicated conservation efforts, these tiny trailblazers are finally back home, While the snails don't actually glow in the dark, each shell is marked with a small dab of UV-reflective paint, allowing researchers to spot and monitor them at night when they're most active. The result? A twinkling trail that looks like a string of Christmas

lights winding through the forest. These festive little snails have already been spotted reproducing both within and beyond the reintroduction areas, signaling a hopeful future for the species. To learn more about conservation efforts, click [this link](#).

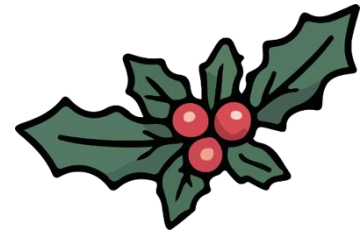


Zero Waste Fun Fact: Waxed Paper Cups

- Do you know why most paper cups have historically not been recyclable or compostable? To keep drinks hot or cold and prevent leakage, many cups are lined with a thin layer of wax or plastic. When these cups are mistakenly put in recycling bins, the lining can contaminate other materials. With advanced technology in modern paper mills, however, the high-grade fiber in these cups can be recovered without contaminating other recycled paper. The lining is screened out and either recycled or converted to energy.
- Compostable paper cups are either plain paper or have a bio-based lining like PLA.

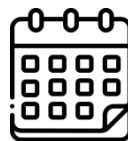


Get Involved!



Join the Green Team!

- Get in on the action and join us at our upcoming events! Look up an upcoming Zero Waste event on our [calendar](#), click on the event's logo to go to its website, and sign up to volunteer for the Green Team.
- Know someone who'd like to get more involved in sustainability? Have them apply to be an HPR team member! Hourly pay for event work and special projects, and HPR-paid opportunities to further their education in composting, recycling, and more. Just email Jeff!



Run Into Us!

Sat. January 24	Bigfoot Snowshoe Race	Traverse City
Sun. February 8	Super 5K	Novi
Sun. March 8	Shamrocks & Shenanigans 5K	Ann Arbor

[Click here](#) for the full schedule.

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

Reach out [here](#) or email jeff@happyplanetrunning.com.

Thank You!

- Thanks for reading and supporting sustainability! If you enjoyed this update, please consider sharing it with others who care, too — together, we can grow a more waste-free future.

Follow us on Social Media!

- To learn more about sustainability and zero waste, and to stay up to date with all Happy Planet Running news and events, follow us on social media!



Follow Along With Us

Instagram: @happy.planet.running

Facebook: @HappyPlanetRunning

TikTok: @happy.planet.running

Copyright © 2025 Happy Planet Running



This issue was produced by Marilyn Harbin and edited by Jeff Jackson.

Happy Holidays &
Happy New Year!

