



Sustainable Strides



A Newsletter for the Eco-Conscious Athlete

From Happy Planet Running

We can make your race leave no trace!

happyplanetrunning.com




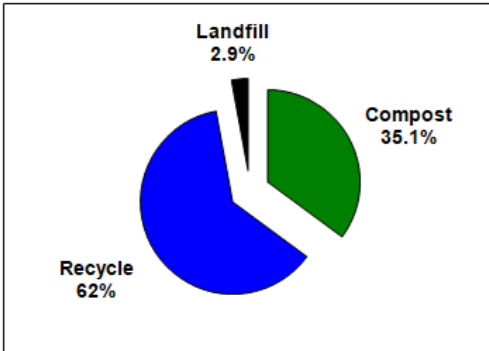
Issue #7 – January 15, 2026

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Happy New Year, everyone! We haven't staffed an event since last issue, so no race updates today. But let's take a look at the Happy Planet Running Year in Review. 2025 was another great year at HPR, with every event keeping at least 95 percent of its waste out of the landfill. Spread the word. It can be done!

	2025 Zero Waste Program Report							
	All Events							
Number of Events: 36								
Total Attendance: 34,149								
Landfill diversion: 97.1%								
Composted	3,471 lbs.							
Recycled & donated	6,132 lbs.							
Landfill	286 lbs.							
Total	9,889 lbs.							
Significant Events								
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Least total waste: The Legend, 27 lbs.Most total waste: Run Woodstock, 1,365 lbs.Greatest diversion: <u>Scrumpy Skedaddle</u>, 99.9%Least landfill: The Legend, 2 ounces								
Also Noteworthy								
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All events had diversion rate over 95%13 events with diversion rate over 99%								
<div><table><tr><td>Recycle</td><td>62%</td></tr><tr><td>Compost</td><td>35.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Landfill</td><td>2.9%</td></tr></table></div> <p>Compost: food waste, napkins, compostable cups, plates, and utensils</p> <p>Standard recycling: cardboard, water bottles, cans, glass bottles, paper cups, paper, plastic containers</p> <p>Special recycling: plastic bags/wrap, disposable gloves, race bibs, small plastics, party supplies, hand warmers, <u>Gu</u> & snack wrappers</p> <p>Donated: Clothing, shoes, leftover food</p> <p>Landfill: tape, dog poop, dirty plastic bags, contaminated packaging, <u>PPE</u></p>			Recycle	62%	Compost	35.1%	Landfill	2.9%
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Report created by Happy Planet Running, LLC. For more details, visit www.happyplanetrunning.com .								



International Zero Waste Month

- January marks International Zero Waste Month! Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) and its members in over 90 countries participate in this celebration to start the new year. During this month, GAIA and its members fight to position Zero Waste as an effective

response to the global waste crisis. To celebrate, January is split into 5 weeks with different themes:

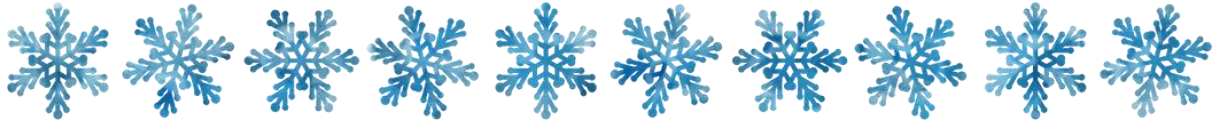
- Week 1: Launch (Jan 1-5)
- Week 2: Barriers to Zero Waste (Jan 6-12)
- Week 3: Solutions Week (Jan 13-19)
- Week 4: False Solutions Week (Jan 20-26)
- Week 5: Humans of Zero Waste (Jan 27-31)
- While GAIA is leading this celebration, we can also celebrate by practicing the 7 Rs: rethink, refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, regift, recover. (There are many variations on this list, but the basic idea is the same.)
- To learn more about this celebration, [visit this link](#).



This Issue's FAQ

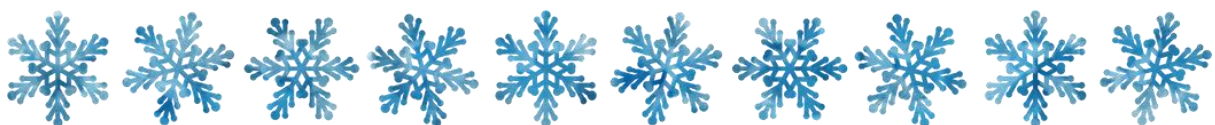
- ***Q: When and How was HPR founded?***
 - Happy Planet Running is a locally owned business founded in 2017 by Jeff Jackson. An avid runner, Jeff saw many of the events he ran produce hundreds of pounds of recoverable waste that was going straight into dumpsters. He knew there had to be a better way. He volunteered at a Zero Waste event, learned the process, and after a year working with a local race organization as a volunteer, incorporated with a focus on making Zero Waste affordable to small to medium-sized events. To date we've served nearly 300 events and recycled and composted over 50 tons of race waste, with an average 95 percent landfill diversion rate.
 - To learn more about what we do and our results, visit the [HPR website](#).





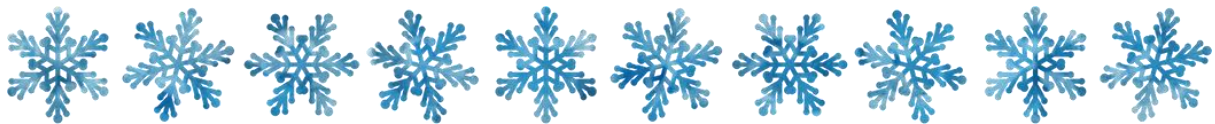
The Latest in Sustainability News

- **New Year, New Rules: States Tackling Packaging:** Many states are introducing new restrictions on certain types of packaging.
 - California shoppers can no longer receive plastic bags in any store that they shop in, and Washington is prohibiting thin single-use plastic bags.
 - Illinois and New York are banning hotels from providing small plastic bottles of shampoo and other personal care items, encouraging refillable containers. (Ed. note: YES!)
 - New York and Virginia are banning use of expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) for single-use containers.
 - To learn more about these new and updated state laws, [read this article](#).
- **Power When Parked”: How EVs can Power Homes:** New research from the University of Michigan has found that electric vehicle (EV) batteries can help power homes, cutting electricity costs and harmful emissions by functioning as electricity storing devices. Vehicle-to-Home (V2H) technology could save EV owners thousands of dollars in charging costs over the vehicle’s lifetime and reduce lifecycle emissions from household electricity by 70-250%. To learn more about how V2H works and its pros and cons, [visit this link](#).



Zero Waste Fun Fact: Plastic Bags

- Did you know that humans use over 5 trillion single-use plastic bags every year? That's 160,000 bags per second. While [Green Sea Turtles are no longer endangered](#) (YAY) thanks to years of conservation efforts, including the reduction of single-use plastic, there is still much work to be done. Single-use plastic bag bans have been proved to reduce plastic bag pollution by 33%, yet only 12 states have some form of ban on them. Ban or not, we can help reduce plastic waste by bringing reusable bags to grocery stores. January 6th was [Refuse Single Use Day](#), so in case you missed it, try and bring a reusable bag to the store next time.
- To read more facts about single-use plastic, [visit this site](#).



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 2026 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!



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