

**USAE Advertorial**  
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**Charlotte Convention Center Proving Sustainable is Attainable**

Kermit was right. It isn't always easy to be green. This is especially true for most convention centers. Environmental concerns such as curbing waste and cutting back on energy and water use are often difficult issues to manage in these mammoth meeting structures. Fortunately, facilities like the Charlotte Convention Center (CCC) are leading the charge and showing others just how easy it is to be green.

The CCC follows a number of sustainable practices that all add up. An award-winning in-house catering staff buys local food for events and uses the process of bundling, which limits the number of suppliers for specialized projects thereby limiting the number of vehicles going to and from the building. This ultimately cuts down on vehicle emissions, contributing to better air quality. When meeting attendees pick up a quick bite to go, they can take pride in the fact that they'll be using a paper box instead of Styrofoam and a new disposable biodegradable cup. This "wonder cup" is made from corn products that only take 50 days to biodegrade as opposed to 50 years for a Styrofoam cup. Also, all cooking oil is recycled and excess food is donated to the Community Food Rescue, the area's largest food donation center.

Solid recycling and energy efficient programs contribute to the CCC's eco-friendly status too. Along with paper products and cardboard, the facility will be recycling all aluminum cans, glass, and plastic bottles by 2008. To keep the 280,000 square feet of exhibit space, 35,000 square foot ballroom, and 46 meeting rooms sparkling, 50% of all cleaning supplies used are environmentally safe and biodegradable. The building's offices have purchased Kyocera printers and copiers, which are more environmentally efficient than other brands. And the signature and striking use of glass to create its open and airy feel is even energy friendly. The glass is classified as low "E", which controls and cuts down on the amount of UV light that flows in.

Other sustainable contributions such as the construction of a light rail transportation line that will run directly through the center of the facility and the use of natural light with its large windows and skylights, make it an environmentally-friendly leader in the meeting space community. So Kermit, hop in your hybrid and head to Charlotte. We love being green. To learn more about the Charlotte Convention Center, visit [www.charlotteconventionctr.com](http://www.charlotteconventionctr.com).