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The National Conference Center Makes Recommendations for Holding Green Meetings

Celebrate Earth Day every day!

LEESBURG, Va., April 22, 2015 – The National Conference Center, one of the largest meeting and training facilities in the nation located within close proximity to Washington Dulles International Airport and just outside of Washington, D.C., holds multiple green industry certifications and awards including Green Seal GS-33 Silver and Virginia Green Certified; Winner of the Loudoun County Green Business Challenge, among others. The conference center uses green practices throughout all areas and aspects—not easy to do when you’re regularly accommodating very large numbers of guests!

Meeting planners should thoughtfully consider green locations when booking meetings and training sessions. Here are some tips, implemented at The National Conference Center, to look for in keeping meetings green:

- **Go paperless**—Meetings generate a lot of paper. Use paperless check in, send documents to meeting attendees electronically and avoid handouts. If you do use handouts, be sure to use recycled paper and/or recycle left over paper. Making USB drives available is an effective way to cut down on paper.
- **Provide electronic brochures and an informative website for your meeting**—This will eliminate the need to mail or hand out costly brochures and will also cut down on paper.
- **Monitor transportation**—Encourage employees to carpool if they’re driving to a meeting site and use shuttles to get to and from the airport and arrange flights and pick up times to minimum shuttle use. Use smaller buses or vans if your group is small and try to use buses with bio-diesel fuel whenever possible.
- **Make sure rooms have motion sensors**—The smart sensors can tell when someone is not in the room and shut off air conditioning or heat. It means the room may be a little warm or cool upon the guests return but it’s a huge energy savings.
- **Encourage employees to reuse towels and sheets during your stay**—People don’t typically wash their sheets and towels every day at home so why do this when you’re away? It not only wastes energy, it also wastes water.
- **Also make sure rooms use CFLs or LED lights**—Many hotels now have policies to use compact fluorescent and light emitting diode bulbs. These reduce energy waste.
- **Use pitchers and bulk water dispensers**—in lieu of bottled water, provide attendees with a reusable (BPA free) water bottle at the beginning of the meeting or training sessions and/or have water pitchers or bulk water dispensers available.
- **For dining, ask if the facility uses sustainable products**—The National Conference Center sources many of its ingredients from area local farms and follows the Monterey Bay Seafood Watch Program to ensure that seafood used is sustainable.

- **Minimize use of disposable products and use biodegradable items when necessary**—This includes coffee cups, stirrers, plastic food cups, and take out containers.
- **The use of trays in the dining room**—Even small things such as using trays in the dining room can be a waste of resources. Recently, The National Conference Center got rid of the use of trays in its dining room. This cuts down on water usage and energy as trays require washing and drying.
- **Recycle**—Make sure the meeting site you choose recycles and has recycle containers in meeting rooms. Check not only on what they do with trash but with leftover food as well. Green properties such as The National have active programs for trash and food recycling.

“Because we’re on such a beautiful 65 acre campus, we’re reminded of the importance of protecting the environment daily,” said Geoff Lawson, vice president and general manager of The National Conference Center and West Belmont Place. “We are constantly adding to and retooling our environmental program.” The property has a fun and unique QR code tour with stops throughout the site and explanation on ways in which The National is protecting the environment.

More about The National Conference Center

Located in Northern Virginia 12 miles from Dulles International Airport and 35 miles from Washington, D.C., The National Conference Center is one of the largest and most comprehensive conference centers in the nation. With 917 guest rooms and over 250,000 square feet of meeting and group function space, including the West Belmont Place catering complex with its 16,500 square foot ballroom, The National has become the nation’s headquarters for productive meetings and West Belmont Place the hub for Loudoun County and surrounding area social functions. West Belmont Place was named 2013 Best Venue by the International Special Events Society. The National Conference Center is also on the GSA schedule. The National is owned by NCC PS Enterprises LLC, a venture between PCCP, LLC and Stoneleigh Capital, LLC., which retained LaKota Hotels & Resorts to oversee all aspects of the day-to-day operations. For information call 800-640-2684 or visit www.conferencecenter.com.

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