



Riverside Park Urban Ecology Center Rental Policies & Procedures



Bookings and Cancellations

The Urban Ecology Center (UEC) Facility Rental & Events Team is happy to answer your questions and offer advice to help you plan your event. We have hosted hundreds of events at our facility and are happy to share tips for the best way to make your event a success!

BOOKING PROCESS

Please reach out to the Event Sales Specialist at the UEC to inquire about availability, set up a tour of our facilities, or to make a reservation. Reservations are based on space and staff availability and are confirmed only upon receipt of a signed contract and down payment/full rental fee.

PAYMENT POLICIES

Payment can be made via cash, credit card, or a check made payable to the Urban Ecology Center. Invoices can be created for organizations that require it and receipts are available upon request.

For classroom and Community Room rentals, full payments are due upon signing the contract.

For second floor and whole building rentals, a non-refundable 50% down payment of the facility rental fee is due upon signing the contract. The remainder of the rental fee is due 12 weeks prior to the event.

The reserved contracted rental hours must be consecutive and include renter's set up and clean up time. Payment for any unused portion of time will not be refunded. **Any additional time used past the contracted time will be charged double the normal hourly rate.**



CANCELLATION POLICIES

If a renter wishes to cancel an event, they should contact the facility rental & events team immediately. **50% of the full rental fee will be withheld for cancellation notices.** Any whole building or second floor rental cancellation notices received less than 90 days prior to event, 100% of rental fee will be withheld.

The UEC reserves the right to cancel a reservation if the facilities are rendered unsuitable for the presentation of the event due to fire, calamity, weather emergency, natural disaster, notice of violation by any government agency, or any occurrence beyond our control. The Renter will not be liable for payment of fees for canceled events, nor will the UEC have any further liability with regard to said canceled event.

We reserve the right to cancel an event at any point if the renter fails to comply with the rental policies. Such cancellation will result in forfeiture of the non-refundable down payment and forfeiture of all rental fees paid to date and the event will not be rescheduled.

All cancellations are subject to an administrative fee.

DAMAGES & ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Any damage to the UEC facilities, property or equipment is the responsibility of the Renter. The renter agrees to compensate the UEC for any damage or excessive clean up fee (i.e. vomit clean up) in a reasonable amount of time. Amount and due date will be assessed by our staff and an invoice will be issued.

Failure for renters, their guests or vendors to vacate by the end of their contracted time will result in additional fees charged to the renter.

CONTRACT & POLICY AMENDMENTS

The UEC reserves the right to amend and update policies and procedures at any time as needed. For health and safety concerns, we follow the Health Department, State of Wisconsin and CDC's requirements and recommendations and may have to adjust policies accordingly.

Planning Your Event

A well organized event is a successful event. Make sure you have plenty of people to help with setup and cleanup and a clear understanding of your responsibilities as a renter to ensure your event's success! Please use the following information to help plan day-of event details:

DAY OF COORDINATORS

A lot of effort goes into the preparation and cleanup of an event. In order to make sure all tasks reach completion, it is wise to hire or appoint a day of coordinator ahead of time and assign them specific duties. We are happy to recommend those we have worked with in the past!

It is also helpful to appoint specific point people and groups of volunteers ahead of time and assign them specific duties to help in set up and clean up efforts.

OUTSIDE VENDORS

Caterers, bartenders, musicians, DJs, party planners, photographers and street performers are all your outside vendors for the event. You can even hire folks to help with your setup and cleanup responsibilities. Outside vendors are responsible for their own equipment and setup and cleanup needs, though we will help them if they plan to use any Urban Ecology Center equipment throughout the night. It is important for us to know who they are and how to contact them before the event. We will gladly meet with vendors, answer their questions and give them a tour in advance of your event. For caterers, we require a walkthrough before large events unless they have worked in our space before. Please have them contact us!

In addition, for any vendor/business who is working on site, we will need a copy of their Certificate of Liability Insurance with Urban Ecology Center listed as certificate holder on file at least 4 weeks prior to the event.

PLANNING TOOLS

As a facility renter at the Urban Ecology Center, you have exclusive access to a variety of tools to help you plan your event. This includes floor plans, timeline examples, vendor recommendations and detailed planning meetings. Our Event Specialist will set up a meeting with you to talk through all of the tools we offer!

Timeline Leading Up to Your Event

As your event draws near, it is important to keep these dates in mind and meet these deadlines to ensure success:

BOOKING

We prefer to book whole building and second floor events more than one month prior to the event date.

To ensure space and staff availability rentals must be booked no less than 2 weeks out from your event. Talk to our staff about altered deadlines for shorter notice events.

RENTAL FEE

The rental fee is due in full 12 weeks prior to the date of whole building and second floor rentals.

For classroom and community room rentals, it is due immediately upon booking.

For second floor and whole building rentals, a non-refundable down payment of 50% of the facility rental fee is due upon reservation.

PLANNING MEETING & FLOOR PLANS

Set up a planning and walk through meeting with a member of our Facility Rental & Events Team 3-6 months out (or earlier if need be). This meeting will discuss floor plan, amenity needs, timeline and vendor information.

Final floor plan selections and modifications are due to us four weeks prior to the event.



Timeline During Your Event

The day of your event is here! Here are some important times to keep in mind when planning your day's schedule.

NOTE: this information is for whole building and second floor rentals that take place after the UEC has closed to the public. Classroom and Community Room rentals can be scheduled during public hours.

Renters are required to do all set up and clean up within the rented time.

CATERERS

Caterers are welcome to arrive earlier in the day to begin prep work in the kitchen. This must be scheduled and confirmed with the Facility Rentals & Events Team. Food should not be set out until after you contracted rental time begins.

FURNITURE

UEC Staff is only allowed to move our own furniture. We prefer that all furniture belonging to the Urban Ecology Center is moved by our staff. Rented or personal furniture will need to be set up by the renter or hired vendor. Furniture has to be set up on the floor it originated from and cannot be moved to other floors.

SET UP

Be sure to include adequate set up time in your rental contract! The Facility Rental & Events Team will set up the space ahead of time based on the agreed upon floor plans. Your contracted start time will be the earliest you can start setting up for your event. Occasionally exceptions can be made for some decorating or to drop off supplies earlier in the day or the day before, but this is subject to availability based on the schedule of programs and other events at the UEC and must be confirmed ahead of time with a member of the Facility Rental & Events Team.

GUESTS ARRIVE

We strongly recommend that you have your guests arrive one hour after your contracted time or later, giving yourself one full hour for setup. More complicated events and floor plans may require additional time.

LAST CALL

Last call for alcohol and dancing should happen no later than 10:30pm. Alcohol and music must end no later than 11pm.

EVENT END

Because we operate in a residential neighborhood, the UEC has a "Good Neighbors Policy". In order to ensure a good relationship with our community by not keeping them up too late, evening events must end by 11:00pm. This includes discontinuing food and alcohol service, turning off the music, and letting your guests know that they "don't have to go home but they can't stay here". The majority of your guests should leave at this point.

CLEAN UP & TAKE DOWN

Urban Ecology Center staff may begin stacking chairs and moving furniture in unused spaces earlier in the evening, but this work will begin in earnest at 11 or 1 hour before the end of your contracted time. All cleanup and take down must be completed and you, your guests and vendors must be out of the building by 12:00am or the end of your contracted time. This includes your responsibility to wash, sanitize, and put away dishes and to clean the kitchen downstairs. Failure to be out by the end of your contracted time will result in additional fees charged to the renter.



Setup and Cleanup

SETUP

Urban Ecology Center Staff Responsibilities:

- Rearrangement of furniture according to your floor plans
- Clean up of any messes in the rentable areas and bathrooms from the day's activities
- Set up of our A/V equipment including speakers, microphones, projector, and screen
- Assistance for outside vendors with UEC equipment including kitchen appliances
- Set up of signs and directional information related to private events, our alcohol policies and smoking stations
- A minimum of two rental attendants will be available for the duration of your event for last minute questions or details

Renter & Vendor Responsibilities:

- Set up of all decorations, linens, center pieces and other items brought in
- Coordinate and communicate with your caterer and bartender to set up all food, drinks, dishes, glasses, place settings and any other items related to food and beverages
- Coordinate and communicate with your outside vendors to set up any of their A/V equipment or other equipment they bring in
- Set up and coordination of any registration or seating assignment tables for your event
- Greet your guests and communicate with them throughout the event about the evening's schedule or to give directions
- Communicate with the UEC about any changes to the plan or schedule as soon as possible



CLEANUP

Urban Ecology Center Staff Responsibilities:

- Rearrangement of all furniture back to default setups for each room and floor
- Take down and storage of all of our A/V equipment and other UEC amenities used during the event
- Removal of all trash and recyclable materials accumulated during the event
- Sweep and mop floors and clean bathrooms.
- Teach your caterer or appointed dish washers how to use our commercial dish sanitizer
- Check the building for damage caused during the event
- Lock up the building after you and your guests leave

Renter Responsibilities:

- Take down all decorations and other items brought in and remove them from the building or store them on a designated pallet in the garage. Anything stored on the pallet must be picked up on the next business day unless an earlier date is offered
- Take down any equipment or supplies brought in by you and your vendors and remove them from the building
- Gather all trash and recyclables and deposit them in the appropriate containers
- Clean up all dishes, glasses and table settings and bus them down to the kitchen to be washed
- Wash the UEC's dishes (if you used them) or clear rented dishes from the kitchen
- Return the kitchen to a clean and organized state including clean up of the counters, carts and floors
- Vendors should spot clean any spills or messes made during service of the event
- Make sure that you, all of your guests, and vendors are out of the building by the end of your contracted time



Food and Drink

At the UEC you can choose from one of our Earth Friendly preferred caterers, hire another caterer of your choice, or even bring in your own food for your event. Our flexible catering policies make it easy for you to customize food and drink exactly the way you would like. We even have a full service kitchen for you to use while you're here!

COMMUNITY & EARTH FRIENDLY CATERERS

The UEC can recommend several local caterers who support the community and the earth through their sustainable practices. We encourage you to choose one of these caterers when planning your event! Just ask for our Recommended Vendor list.

OTHER CATERERS

Do you have another caterer in mind that you would like to work with? No problem! We are happy to meet and work with any caterer you choose. If they have never worked at our centers before, they will have to come in for a walk through ahead of time. We will also need them to send us a copy of their Certificate of Liability Insurance at least 4 weeks prior to your event.

BRING YOUR OWN FOOD

For events of 50 guests or lower, you may bring in your own food. You can use our kitchen to warm food and get it set, but should plan on doing the majority of the prep work and cooking before you arrive.

LEFTOVERS

In keeping with our earth friendly practices, we ask that you try to not throw away large amounts of leftover food. Instead you can take them home with you, send them home with your guests, or donate them to the Center. Our staff and volunteers appreciate leftovers!



ALCOHOL

The UEC allows alcohol to be served at private events, provided that the following conditions are met:

- For events of 50 or more people, all alcohol must be served by an UEC approved bartending company that provides state licensed bartenders and liquor liability insurance. Licenses and a Certificate of Liquor Liability Insurance must be submitted with the Urban Ecology Center named as certificate holder, at least four weeks prior to the event.
- Alcohol can be served at private parties for your invited guests and not at rental events open to the general public
- No alcohol may be served to minors under the age of 21
- Alcohol may not be served at parties for teenagers or children, including but not limited to birthday parties, graduation parties, coming of age parties, etc.
- For events that take place during our public hours, alcohol must be kept in the rented room and may not be taken into public areas of the building
- For Whole Building or 2nd Floor events, alcoholic beverages must be kept in the building or on the second floor deck and tower. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the exterior grounds or in the park.
- Alcoholic shots are not permitted
- Non-profit organizations that wish to sell alcohol as a fundraiser must obtain a Special-B Permit from the City of Milwaukee prior to the event. Special-B Permits cover only the sale of beer and wine, not liquor. A copy of your Special B permit is due four weeks prior to the event
- The UEC reserves the right to close the bar if the consumption of alcohol gets out of hand or creates any kind of conflict. Disruptive guests may be asked to leave.

SMOKING

The UEC does not permit smoking in the building, on our decks and patios, or on our tower. We can set up a smokers' station in front of the garage for your smoking guests.

Kitchen and Dishes

FULL SERVICE KITCHEN

The UEC has a commercial grade kitchen in the basement available for you or your caterers to use. You are welcome to use any of the appliances and dishes you find in our kitchen free of charge – all we ask is that you leave the kitchen as clean as you found it. We can often accommodate caterers and other vendors who need to access the kitchen prior to the contracted rental time. Please discuss specific arrangements with our staff. Kitchen amenities include:

- Six-burner range and 26" oven
- Commercial size refrigerator and freezer (expect them to be half full with our own food)
- Commercial sanitizer that can sanitize a load of washed dishes in about three minutes
- Wash sinks
- Ample counter space.
- Assorted kitchen utensils, cooking sheets, pots, and pans
- 200 place settings of dinner plates, salad/dessert plates, bowls and silverware
- 200 Pint glasses and wine glasses, and some coffee mugs are also available upon request

KITCHENETTE

The second floor has a small kitchenette with a sink and standard refrigerator that can be used during your event. Space in the refrigerator is limited. This kitchenette is often used by the bartender to serve drinks.



DISHES

Because we are an environmental center, **we do not allow** the use of styrofoam and plastic disposable plates, cups and utensils. Paper and compostable (bamboo, palm, etc) napkins, plates and utensils are acceptable because we can compost or recycle them.

The good news is that you can use our dishes at no charge! All that we ask is that you arrange to bus, wash and neatly put away all dishes by the end of the night. The UEC has a commercial sanitizer, multiple sinks and washing trays that make this much easier, but the process still requires at least two to three dedicated people throughout the evening. This can be achieved in a variety of ways:

- You may contract with your caterer to bus and wash dishes for you. Your caterer might assess an additional fee for this service but, considering we offer the use of our dishes at no cost, this may be well worth it to you.
- You may contract with your bartender to wash glassware for you. Your bartender might assess an additional fee for this service, but considering we offer the use of our glassware at no cost, this may be well worth it to you.
- You may hire an outside vendor such as a server service to set up, bus and wash dishes for you.
- You may appoint a few volunteers to set up, bus and wash dishes for you. We are happy to train people to use an industrial sanitizer. However, it should be made clear to your dishwashing delegates that this process is a full-time job during the event. Therefore, your volunteers will likely miss the majority of the party (in other words, don't ask your mother to do it).

If the use and clean up of our dishes seems challenging for your event, we encourage you to consider renting dishes through your caterer or another vendor and paying them to do the washing for you.

SET UP & CLEAN UP

The setup and cleanup of all dishes and food related items is the responsibility of the renters and your hired vendors. We do not charge anything for the use of our amenities but ask that everything is returned to the condition in which you found it in when you arrived.

Decorations

Guests are welcome to decorate the Urban Ecology Center for events. In keeping with our mission to implement environmentally sustainable practices whenever possible, we ask that you keep the environment in mind when you choose your decorations. Stringed lights and vases with flowers (especially sustainably grown flowers) are encouraged.

We do not allow the use of plastic table cloths, paper streamers, confetti and other single use items as decorations. Please refer to our renter sustainability guide for other prohibited items and alternatives.

OUR FURNITURE

Urban Ecology Center staff will move our furniture into position or out of the way for your event. This includes tables, chairs, couches, literature racks, exhibits, coat racks, plants, end tables, the bar and anything else found in our building on a regular day. There is no extra charge to use our furniture. We do not provide linens but they can often be rented through a caterer or an outside vendor. All you need to do is meet with a member of our facility rental and events team to decide on one of our floor plans that would fit your needs! This will be due to us four weeks prior to your event.

FURNITURE FROM AN OUTSIDE VENDOR

Renters who wish to rent furniture from an outside vendor may do so at their own expense. Furniture must be dropped off the day of the event and picked up the same day. The renter and their vendor are responsible for the set up and movement of any rented furniture. If same day drop off and pick up is a problem – please talk with the our facility rental staff to arrange otherwise. Our staff are not allowed to move non-UEC furniture for liability purposes.

BANNERS & SIGNS

Renters may hang up signs, banners or other party materials in our building provided they use rope or painter's tape and do not use any nails or other fasteners in our building. We do not allow decorations to be hung in the stairways due to fire code.

SET UP & CLEAN UP

Setup and cleanup of decorations, dishes and other items not belonging to the UEC are the responsibility of the renters and their vendors. This includes table decorations, place settings, linens, signs and anything else brought in by the renter or their vendors. Setup can begin promptly at the start of your contracted rental time. All decorations must be taken down and removed from the building the end of the contracted time for the event.

For renters who wish to bring in some items early, the UEC may provide an area located in our garage which renters can use to store items for their event in advance. Items can be stored no earlier than the day before your rental and must be removed by the next business day. All items must be able to fit in the designated area. Overflow items must be brought in at the start of your contracted time on the day of the event.

Renters may be able to setup some out of the way decorations (such as string lights around the banister) the day before your event, but it depends entirely on what else is going on in the building at that time. Please inquire with the facility rental and events team prior to your event.

CANDLES

We allow the use of small, contained votive candles as centerpieces on tables or as accents around the building. All candles must be contained in a vessel (jar, votive, etc.) and the flame cannot be higher than the top of the container. Large candles, tiki torches, candelabras, and other large flames are not a good idea in our very wooden building.

AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

Want to have music playing during your event? Need a microphone for speeches? Want to project a presentation to your guests on a screen? We've got you covered! The Urban Ecology Center has a variety of types of audio/visual (A/V) equipment available for renters to use free of charge. Simply let us know in advance what you would like and where you would like it set up and we will be happy to take care of it for you.

AV EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE TO BORROW

- Wireless Microphone
- Yamaha Stagepas 600BT Portable PA System
- In-house speakers for use with music playing devices
- Projector
- Projection Screen

Audiovisual Equipment

DJs & LIVE BANDS

The UEC is happy to work with a DJ or live band you hire for your event. Most DJs and bands bring in their own equipment, but they are welcome to use our portable PA system and soundboard if they would like. Please have your vendor contact us directly if they have any questions about our facility.

The UEC is located in a residential neighborhood, so we ask that music vendors keep the volume at a reasonable level. Our staff reserves the right to ask that music be turned down if necessary and appreciate the cooperation of our renters and their vendors.

MICROPHONES

We have a wireless microphone that can be used with our in-house speakers on our first and second floor. We also have a wired microphone that can be plugged in to our portable PA system anywhere in our building.

PROJECTION EQUIPMENT

Our 2nd Floor and classrooms can be set up with a projector screen, laptop and projector for your A/V presentation. You can simply bring your presentation on a laptop with an HDMI or VGA plug in, plug it in to our machines and go. All of our projectors are PC compatible. If your device or software is Mac-formatted, you'll have to format it or bring in specific cables to make it PC compatible. Our Community Room has a ceiling mounted projector and room sound system that can be hooked up to a laptop with a HDMI port. You are welcome to use one of our portable projectors if your laptop does not have a HDMI port.

INTERNET

The UEC offers password protected, free wireless available for all of our guests. Our staff will provide login information as needed.

