

Essex Resident Event Resource Guide



Hey, Essex communities!

***Wanna improve resident retention, reduce service requests and score higher Yelp reviews?
Resident events are the key!***

Happy residents wanted! Studies show that satisfied residents are more willing to accept higher rent increases, take better care of their homes, and submit fewer service requests. Plus, retaining current residents costs less than acquiring new customers. Resident events are one way to increase your residents' satisfaction.

Effective (*and fun!*) resident events also ...

- Strengthen Community Ties
- Encourage Positive Online Reviews
- Promote Increased Kingsley Scores
- Drive Qualified Traffic and Leases
- Add Value to Prospect Tours
- Enhance Associate/Resident Communication

We could continue, but we think you get the point: Resident events are a good business investment.

- Advertise resident referrals
- Showcase vacant units or models
- Want to improve Kingsley scores and reputation management performance?
 - Solicit feedback from residents about how you can better address their needs
 - Promote positive online reviews

Tip #3: Choose events that *your* residents will love

Does your community enjoy art, food, educational activities, or family-oriented events? When are your residents available and most likely to attend an event? What excites, inspires and motivates them? You know your community best, so consider what your residents value most when planning your events.

Tip #4: Promote your event

Once you've planned your event, it's time to let everyone know! Spread the word through the resources available to you.

Ways to promote your event:

- Post event flyers throughout the community, such as in your leasing office, mailroom, elevators and laundry rooms
- Include an event flyer with completed service request paperwork
- In Rentcafé Site Manager, post an announcement
- If your community has its own Facebook page, post the announcement there
- Send residents an eBlast
- Invite residents in person! When a resident stops by the leasing office for any reason, extend a personal invitation.

Tip #5: Include your entire community staff

Who doesn't love a party? This is a valuable opportunity for residents and the E-Team to mingle and strengthen relationships. Ask office and maintenance associates to stop by, even if they can only stay for a few minutes.

Tip #6: Foster Inclusivity

Everyone is welcomed at our communities! Make sure that event themes are carefully chosen so that no one feels left out.

A few examples:

- Refrain from using a religious theme.
 - Hosting an event that focuses on a specific religious aspect may deter residents from attending.
 - Let's say, instead of hosting an Easter Egg Hunt you can host a Spring Fling Scavenger Hunt!
 - Or, instead of a Christmas Party, host a Gift Wrapping Party.

Event Types and Flyers

Need some event inspiration? How about a way to advertise your event? We've got you covered! Within this guide, events are organized by category: Food; Activity; Seasonal; Game/Sports.

Find overviews of each suggested event on the pages indicated. To jump to each event's flyer, click on the appropriate link in the table below, or download directly from Buzz [here](#).

<p>Food (Pages 6-9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbecue • Breakfast Party <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breakfast On-the-Go ○ Continental Breakfast ○ Sunday Brunch • Cocoa Bar • Coffee • Cooking Class • Cupcake Decorating • Dessert • Donuts • Food Truck • Ice Cream Social • Pizza Party <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flyer Option 1 ○ Flyer Option 2 • Snow Cone • Taco Tuesday • Wine & Cheese Party • 	<p>Activity (Pages 10-13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Garage Sale • Craft Theme • Donation Drive • Fiesta Time • Lease Renewal Party • Luau • Open House • Paint Party • Photo Booth • Pool Party • Spa Theme • Yappy Hour
<p>Seasonal (Pages 14-16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December Holidays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gift Wrapping Party ○ Gingerbread House Decorating ○ Happy Holidays ○ White Elephant Party • Fall Festival • Halloween <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Halloween – Pumpkin Carving ○ Halloween – Trick or Treat • Spring Fling • St. Patrick's Day • Surf into Summer • Valentine's Day 	<p>Game/Sports (Pages 17-18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness Class • Game Night – Board Games • Sports Viewing Party • Yoga <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Poolside Yoga

Food Events

Barbecue

Summer was made for cooking outdoors! Host residents for an afternoon or early evening of grilling fun.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
 - Food: hot dogs, burgers, vegetarian patties, buns, potato salad, potato chips, watermelon, condiments
 - Beverages: soft drinks, water, iced tea
 - Décor: balloons, color-coordinated tablecloths, centerpieces
 - Other: charcoal, if you have charcoal barbecues
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Breakfast Party

It's the most important meal of the day! Jump-start your residents' day with a bite on-the-go, continental breakfast or a full Sunday brunch spread.

Breakfast On-the-Go, Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: paper lunch bag or paper box, napkins
- Food: fruit (bananas, oranges, apples), pastry (muffins, bagels, Danish), granola bar
- Beverages: bottled juice, bottled coffee, bottled water
- Set-up: Tables at each exit, staffed with associates to instruct residents

Continental Breakfast, Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: fruit (bananas, oranges, apples), pastry (muffins, bagels, Danish)
- Beverages: juice, coffee, water
- Set-up: Tables to place breakfast items

Sunday Brunch, Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: If your clubhouse has a stove, host an omelet station with fresh eggs, prepped vegetables, shredded cheese, bacon or sausages, and tortillas, biscuits or bagels.
- Beverages: juice, coffee, water

Cocoa Bar

Brrr! In the colder months, warm up your residents with hot chocolate and a selection of fun toppings.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: heat-proof cups, spoons, napkins, tablecloths
- Food: hot chocolate powder or syrup, hot water, cookies
- Toppings: marshmallows (regular, mini, flavored), peppermint sticks, whipped cream, ground cinnamon, chocolate sprinkles

Coffee

Invite your residents for a custom coffee and friendly conversation.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: heat-proof cups, cold cups, coffee stirrers, napkins, tablecloths
- Beverages: coffee (caffeinated and decaf; flavored and regular), tea (herbal, caffeinated)
- Condiments: creamer (flavored and regular), half & half, sweeteners
- Food: cookies, pastries

Cooking Class

Partner with a local chef instructor to teach residents basic knife skills, regional cuisine, or new twists on classic dishes.

Suggested Supplies

- Set-up: dedicated space (clubhouse or outdoor grill area), tables, chairs
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, utensils
- Food/Beverages: Light refreshments
- Optional: aprons for participants

Cupcake Decorating

Life is sweet at Essex! Invite residents to decorate their own tasty cupcakes.

Suggested Supplies

- Set-up: dedicated space (clubhouse or outdoor area), tables, chairs
- Food: baked cupcakes (chocolate, vanilla), frosting (variety of flavors and colors),
- Toppings: sprinkles, crushed cookies, gummy worms, candy pieces
- Decorating Supplies: decorating stencils, plastic utensils, bowls for holding toppings, plastic bags for piping
- Décor: streamers, centerpieces, colored tablecloths

Dessert

Celebrate sweet teeth with sugary delights that would make Willy Wonka envious!

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: cups, plates, napkins, forks, spoons, knives
- Food: variety of desserts
 - Bonus Tip: Bite-sized and miniature treats will make it easier to serve guests
- Beverages: coffee (caffeinated and decaffeinated), tea (herbal and caffeinated), milk
- Décor: colored tablecloths, balloons, centerpieces

Donuts

Glazed, filled with jelly or dusted with powdered sugar, we love every type of donut (even holes!). Invite residents to drop by for a delicious donut.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, utensils, cups
- Food: variety of donuts
- Beverages: milk, coffee

Food Truck

Food trucks cater to casual nibblers and foodies alike. Reserve a food truck or two to set-up shop from your parking lot and invite residents to dine as a community. (Food paid for by residents).

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: balloons, streamers
- Other: traffic cones to reserve space for food truck parking, trash cans, picnic tables

Ice Cream Social

I scream, you scream ... host a build-your-own ice cream sundae bar with all the fixins'.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: bowls, napkins, spoons, cups
- Food: ice cream (variety of flavors) ice cream flavors
- Toppings: hot fudge, caramel, cherries, chopped candy bars, whipped cream, sprinkles.
- Beverages: root beer (for ice cream floats), water
- Supplies: ice cream scoopers
- Décor: balloons, streamers, colored tablecloths

Pizza Party

What's your favorite topping? Invite residents to grab a slice of pizza!

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: plates, napkins, cups
 - Food: pizza with a variety of toppings, parmesan cheese, red pepper flakes
 - Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
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Snow Cones

Beat the heat with this frozen treat! Invite residents to enjoy a custom snow cone with a variety of flavored syrups.

Suggested Supplies

- Equipment: Snow cone maker (consider hiring or partnering with a local vendor for this event)
 - Disposable tableware: spoons, straws, napkins, paper cones/snow cone holders
 - Food/Beverages: snow cone syrup, water
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Taco Tuesday

It doesn't need to be Tuesday to enjoy tacos, but we'll use any excuse to throw a mini fiesta.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: plates, napkins, cups
 - Food: taco fillings (carne asada, carnitas, grilled chicken, grilled vegetables), taco toppings (shredded cheese, sour cream, avocado, hot sauce), tortillas (corn, flour), tortilla chips, salsa
 - Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
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Wine & Cheese Party*

Feeling fancy? Invite residents (21 years and older only, please!) for a classy social event.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: plastic wine glasses, cocktail napkins, plates, toothpicks, serving utensils
- Food: variety of hard and soft cheeses, dried fruit, nuts, crackers
- Beverages: variety of red and white wines, water

Bonus Tip: Do a bit of online research to see which wine and cheese pair best.

*Please note: You will need to receive approval from your Regional Portfolio Manager to serve alcohol on-site.

Activity Events

Community Garage Sale

Invite residents to turn clutter into cash. Gently-used clothing, sports equipment, furniture and other household items are ideal items to sell.

Suggested Supplies

- Equipment: poster board for making signs, price stickers, permanent markers, shopping bags
- Food/Beverages: water bottles, light refreshments

Bonus Tip: Donate all or a portion of sales to a local charity.

Craft Theme

Invite residents to get crafty and make something memorable.

Suggested Crafts

- Flower/terrarium arrangement
- Birdhouse building
- Candle making
- Scrapbooking

Suggested Supplies

- Food/Beverages: light refreshments
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Donation Drive

Show the community you care with a donation drive event.

Suggested Ideas

- Coat Drive
- Blanket Drive
- Canned Food Drive
- eWaste Drive
- Back-to-School Supply Drive
- Adopt-a-Family

Fiesta Time

Viva la fiesta! Treat your residents and prospects to a south-of-the-border style celebration in their honor.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: brightly colored plates, napkins, cups, utensils
- Food: miniature versions of tacos and quesadillas; chips and salsa
- Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
- Entertainment: Mariachi or live band, piñata filled with candy

Lease Renewal Party

Current residents are your VIP's! Encourage residents to renew their lease on the spot by inviting them to the leasing office for a fun treat.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: plates, napkins, cups, utensils
- Food: pizza, light snacks
- Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
- Additional Supplies: Printed lease documents for resident to sign *or* computer with access to digital lease documents

Bonus Tip: We suggest extending your office hours on a weekday for this event.

Luau

Aloha 'oe! Picture yourself on a tropical beach and get festive with a Hawaiian-themed party.

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: grass skirt tablecloths, floral garland, pineapples as centerpieces
- Party favors: floral leis, hula skirts, novelty sunglasses, beach balls
- Games: limbo, pass the coconut (played like Hot Potato), hula hoop competition
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: fruit kebabs, pork sliders on Hawaiian buns, caramelized Maui onion dip with chips
- Beverages: tropical mocktail (try a virgin mai tai or piña colada), pineapple lemonade, soda, iced tea, water

Open House

Invite new prospects, community partners, realtors, and brokers to tour (and rent!) your community.

Suggested Supplies

- Disposable tableware: plates, napkins, cups, utensils
 - Food: bite-sized snacks and finger foods
 - Beverages: iced tea, water
 - Additional Supplies: property flyers, business cards
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Paint Party

Invite a local artist to provide step-by-step guidance for residents to paint a memorable masterpiece.

Suggested Supplies

- Project Supplies: paper, canvas or pottery; paint (acrylic, watercolor, etc.); art pencils; easels; drop cloths (for protecting the floor, if necessary)
 - Disposable tableware: plates, napkins, cups, utensils, tablecloths
 - Food: bite-sized snacks and finger foods
 - Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
 - Décor: Consider a theme related to the paint subject
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Photo Booth

Invite residents to take fun photos and silly selfies! Engage a vendor to set up a photo booth in your clubhouse.

Suggested Supplies

- Photo package may include:
 - Set-up & tear-down
 - Full-time photo booth attendant
 - Unlimited photos: instant prints; ability to share via social; online photo gallery for both residents and associates to access; images provided via Flash drive
 - Backdrops: variety of elegant & fun backdrops
 - Props: masks, wigs, feather boas, hats, mustache-on-a-stick, sunglasses

Pool Party

When summertime rolls around, invite residents to gather poolside to cool down and party down.

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: paper lanterns
- Party favors: sunscreen, bug spray, pool towels, novelty sunglasses, water bottle, bubbles
- Games: inflatable pool toys, pool noodle
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Snacks: sand pails filled with snacks such as popcorn, pretzels, cookies and candy; sliced fruit such as watermelon, pineapple and melon
- Beverages: Lemonade, iced tea, water

Spa Theme

Help your residents unwind with a spa-themed get-together. To up the relaxation factor, partner with a local salon.

Suggested Ideas

- Offer manicures and pedicures
- Provide mini-massages, like a hand and foot massage or even a chair massage.

Yappy Hour

Calling all pet owners! Invite pets and “paw-rents” to mix and mingle.

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: paw-print tablecloths,
- Party favors: gift bag specific for cats or dogs, including small toys and treats and a water bowl
- Snacks (for the pets!): dog biscuits, cat treats
- Snacks (for people!): bite-sized snacks and finger foods
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Beverages: soda, iced tea, water
- Games: balls (in various sizes for all breeds), frisbees, catnip, cat feather toys

Ideas & Giveaways

- Hold a pet costume parade around your community
 - Offer branded dog bag dispensers – available through The Home Store
 - Invite the Humane Society to offer pet adoptions on-site. Consider waiving the first month of pet rent if a resident adopts a pet at this event.
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Seasonal Events

December Holidays

No matter what their holiday, invite your residents to celebrate the season in various ways.

Suggested Ideas

- Gift Wrapping

 - Supplies

 - Space with table and large surface area for wrapping
 - Wrapping paper (variety)
 - Paper holiday bags
 - Tissue paper
 - Scissors
 - Double-sided tape
 - Labels and gift tags
 - Ribbons and bows
 - Markers and pens
 - Holiday music (appropriate for wide-audience and beliefs)
 - Light snacks and refreshments (optional)

- Gingerbread house decorating

 - Supplies

 - Gingerbread house kits
 - Dedicated space and tables for decorating
 - Snacks and refreshments

- Happy Holidays

 - Supplies

 - Themed decorations
 - Snacks and refreshments

- White Elephant

 - Supplies

 - Gifts under a certain price limit
 - Snacks and refreshments
 - Themed decorations

Fall Festival

Celebrate the change of seasons with an autumn-themed event.

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: leaf garland, pumpkins and gourds, paper lanterns in fall colors
- Games: pumpkin tic-tac-toe (use small pumpkins as X's and O's),
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: caramel apple bar (provide apple slices, kebab stick, dipping caramel and various toppings like sprinkles and nuts), popcorn
- Beverages: hot apple cider, hot chocolate, water

Halloween

Boo! Invite residents for a frightful and delightful event Halloween event.

Suggested Ideas

- Trick-or-Treat Event – invite residents to collect treats around the community
Supplies: Candy, bags, décor
- Pumpkin Carving – invite residents to carve a pumpkin to take home
Supplies: Pumpkins, carving utensils, stencils, candles, light refreshments
- Costume Contest – invite residents to show off their costume and give prizes for different categories.

Spring Fling

Greet springtime blossoms and sunshine with a fun resident event!

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: pastel and floral decorations
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: bite-sized vegetables and dip, fresh cut fruit
- Beverages: lemonade, fruit and veggie juice blend, iced tea, water

St. Patrick's Day

Celebrate the luck o' the Irish as a community, and don't forget to wear green!

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: green and gold decorations, shamrock garland
- Games: Irish jig dance-off, gold hunt (hide chocolate gold coins), lucky bingo (St. Patrick's themed bingo with small prizes)
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: Lucky Charms cereal marshmallow treats (just like Rice Krispy treats), gold-foil covered chocolate coins, rainbow cupcakes
- Beverages: Green mint "shamrock" milkshakes, iced green tea, spearmint lemonade

Surf into Summer

Summer, summer, summertime, time to sit back and unwind ... with your residents!

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: seashell garland, ocean-blue tablecloths
- Games: Irish jig dance-off, gold hunt (hide chocolate gold coins), lucky bingo (St. Patrick's themed bingo with small prizes)
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: watermelon slices, goldfish crackers, chips and salsa, grilled veggies and dip, mini BBQ sliders, Lifesavers candy, popsicles
- Beverages: lemonade, iced tea, water

Valentine's Day

Help residents fall in love with your community this Valentine's Day!

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: pink, red and white decorations
 - Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
 - Food: strawberries and chocolate fondue, Hershey's Kisses, red velvet cupcakes
 - Beverages: pink lemonade, sparkling apple cider, water
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Games/Sports Events

Fitness Classes

Invite residents to get physical with a fun fitness event!

Suggested Supplies

- Workout space, such as your clubhouse, pool, or lawn
 - Certified instructor
 - Bottled water
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Game Night

Let the games begin! Strike up friendly competition among your residents with a classic game night.

Suggested Supplies

- Games: card decks, various board games
 - Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
 - Food: bite-sized snacks and finger foods
 - Beverages: lemonade, iced tea, water
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Sports Viewing Party

Go, team, go! Host a viewing party in your clubhouse where residents can cheer on their favorite team together.

Suggested Supplies

- Décor: colors of the sports teams
- Disposable tableware: paper plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups, tablecloths
- Food: pizza, wings, chips and dip; nacho bar (tortilla chips, cheese sauce, chili, salsa, lettuce, sour cream, jalapeno peppers, guacamole, black olives, green onions, tomatoes); hot dog bar (hot dogs, sausages, chili, mustard, ketchup, relish, pickles, onions, crushed potato chips, bacon bits, cheese)
- Beverages: soda, iced tea, lemonade, water

Yoga or Poolside Yoga

Om! Partner with a certified yoga instructor to guide a yoga practice for residents. Practicing yoga outdoors by the pool is a great option, too.

Suggested Supplies

- Bottled water
- Post-class, offer cool hand towels
- Extra yoga mats for residents to borrow
- Relaxing music, supplied by instructor (optional)

Thank you!

We hope this guide has revved you up to host your own resident events. If you have any questions, event suggestions or success stories, send them our way to marketing@essex.com.

