

CAMPUS LIFE SUSTAINABILITY

HELP KEEP CORNELL GREEN!

SUSTAINABILITY AT CORNELL

Climate change is a reality, but at Cornell, we recognize that we have the capacity to positively influence the future through innovative collaborative efforts and individual actions. At Cornell, students, staff, faculty, researchers, and the administration are dedicated to the principle of sustainability, or "**meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**" Sustainability is a holistic approach to ensuring long-term stability for society and the planet through *environmental protection, equity, and economic development.*

Cornell has become a national leader in combating climate change and in 2007 President Skorton signed the President's Climate Commitment, pledging Cornell to achieve **carbon neutrality by 2050**. Cornell's commitment to sustainability is natural, as the founding principles of Ezra Cornell and A.D. White promote leadership in education and research, developing technologies to improve the world, and inspiring students to progressively embrace challenges. In September 2009, Cornell released the **Climate Action Plan (CAP)**, which includes a step-by-step breakdown of forward-thinking solutions for achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, including renewable energy research, alternative transportation, energy conservation, and green development. For more information about the Climate Action Plan, visit <http://www.sustainablecampus.cornell.edu/climate/index.cfm>.

In order for the Division of Student & Academic Services to continue being a successful leader in university sustainable practices, we need our student staff members to play a vital role. We need your help in educating and developing Cornell students, and making sustainable practices systemic to living and programming in the residence halls. As RAs and graduate student staff members, you have the unique ability to play a role in fostering more sustainable behaviors on campus through peer-to-peer education.

TAKING A HOLISTIC APPROACH

- Recycling is just one piece of the puzzle. By gaining a new awareness of how our shopping, energy use, and lifestyle choices negatively impact the environment, we can begin to make positive changes to reduce our negative effects.
- As a student staff member, you can contribute by encouraging your residents to live by the three Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and by role-modeling them yourself.
 - ***REDUCE – Consume less!*** – Process of minimizing resource use and energy consumption. Buy less and save money; choose products with minimal packaging that can be reused or recycled; use less water; decrease your daily energy consumption.
 - ***REUSE – Buy things that last!*** – Process of using items more than once. This includes reusing items for the same function AND reusing items for new functions. Choose durable items over disposable ones; repair items rather than discarding them; pass unwanted items to someone who can make use of them.

- **RECYCLE** – *Collect, sort, reprocess, purchase!* – Series of activities that involves collecting materials that may otherwise be considered waste, sorting and processing recyclables into raw materials, and manufacturing raw materials into new products. Sort trash; recycle in proper receptacles; buy recycled products.
- **Reduce** is regarded as the most effective of the three Rs – the best way to counter waste overflow is to not produce it in the first place! In general, this is done by avoiding disposable, over-packaged or single-use products. **Reuse** is considered the second best way to reduce waste – if you can reuse your waste or give it to someone else who could use it, it is no longer considered waste! **Recycle** is surely the most popular of the three Rs – any waste you put into the recycling bin is raw material for the recycling industry.
- **WHY REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE?** – Living by the three Rs saves energy, natural resources, money, and landfill space. It reduces water, land and air pollution, global warming, acid rain, ozone depletion, and forest & biodiversity destruction. It also creates jobs, environmental awareness, and a just global community.

****It's the law in NYS and in Tompkins County.** County personnel at the landfill inspect trash. Recyclable items in the trash result in heavy fines or potential loss of service for violators. This means, if students throw out recyclable items, the Division of Student & Academic Services could be fined and banned from county landfills. We would potentially have to bear the cost of shipping trash to other states! Such cost increases would result in higher room rates, and such shipping would result in higher carbon emissions.

**For more information about the three Rs, visit www.epa.gov/msw/reduce.htm*

SUSTAINABLE TIPS FOR RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

REDUCE – CONSERVE ENERGY AND RESOURCES

- Turn off lights and unplug appliances before leaving your room/apartment.
- Activate your computer's "sleep" mode (screensavers do not save energy) and turn off your printer.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with florescent bulbs.
- Turn off water while brushing your teeth or washing your hands, and keep your showers short.
- Wash clothing in cold water and use biodegradable detergent.
- Use a drying rack for your clothes to cut down on energy and laundry expenses.
- Submit maintenance requests promptly (at housing.cornell.edu) to fix leaking faucets, running toilets, or malfunctioning appliances.
- Walk, ride your bike, or take the bus rather than driving.
- Use the stairs instead of taking the elevator.
- Buy local produce when available, and look for eco-friendly products that use recycled materials.
- Buy in bulk, and reduce the amount of packaging you purchase with products.

**For more ideas on how to Reduce, visit www.newdream.org*

**For information about the environmental practices and policies of the companies you buy from, visit www.responsibleshopper.org*

REUSE – USE EVERYTHING MORE THAN ONCE

- Use refillable containers, such as BPA-free reusable water bottles, instead of disposable plastic bottles.
- Bring your own mug to campus and residence hall functions.
- Use your own mug for coffee or tea (campus cafes will give you a discount!)
- Use recycled products.
- Avoid disposable, over-packaged, single-use products.
- Use your own bags to transport groceries and other purchases instead of paper/plastic bags.
- Use collected plastic bags as trashcan garbage bag liners.
- Give unwanted clothes, toys, and other belongings informally to family, friends, or neighbors, or explicitly through organizations like Freecycle and anti-poverty charities like the Salvation Army. Watch for Share the Warmth bins for donating clothing right in your residence hall. The recipients lives right in Tompkins County.
- Buy items from craigslist and yard sales.
- Buy used books.
- Repair damaged items instead of throwing them away.

**For more information about the benefits of using refillable beverage containers, visit www.grrn.org/beverage/refillables/index.html*

**To learn how to find a new home for something you no longer need, visit www.freecycle.org*

RECYCLE – TURN WASTE INTO GOODS

- Dispose of **recyclables** in your residential community's marked receptacles:
 - **PAPER** – Includes most paper products such as white and colored paper, newspaper, magazines, mail, notebooks, phonebooks, post-it notes, and flattened cereal, tissue and shoeboxes.
 - **CONTAINERS** – Includes plastic containers labeled #1-7 (marked on bottom of containers); brown, green and clear glass bottles and jars; metal cans and aluminum foil; paper milk and juice cartons.
 - **CARDBOARD** – Includes clean corrugated cardboard packing boxes (flattened), pizza boxes, etc.
 - **PLASTIC BAGS** – Plastic bag recycling bins are located in most campus community centers.

- **ELECTRONICS** – Contact the University Grounds Recycling Department at (607) 254-1666 or recycle@cornell.edu for information about recycling your computer and other electronic hardware. Contact the Finger Lakes ReUse Center for recycling other electronics. <http://fingerlakesreuse.org/index.shtml>
- **PRINTER INK CARTRIDGES and BATTERIES** – Recycling receptacles can be found at the following locations across campus: Day Hall mailroom, S.T. Olin stockroom, Boyce Thompson Institute mailroom, Clark Hall machine shop, Humphreys Service Building vending area, Vet Medical Center recycle room, Maplewood Community Center, Alice Cook House office, Carl Becker House office and Hans Bethe House office.
- In the Recycling Room, there will be signs above each receptacle clearly identifying what can and cannot be recycled.
- To dispose of biohazardous materials please contact Environmental Health and Safety at (607) 255-8200.
- **Compost** organic matter in Cornell Dining facilities (Trillium, Martha’s Café, Ivy Room, Risley Dining, Synapsis Café, 104!West, and Moosewood at Anabel Taylor):
 - **FOOD SCRAPS**- Leftover food can be diverted from landfills and instead used as nutrient-rich soil supplements for local farms including here at Cornell.
 - **PAPER PRODUCTS**- Napkins, juice cartons, paper cups, paper plates
 - **BIODEGRADABLE CONTAINERS**- “FreshTake” PLA (polylactic acid) containers, utensils, and similar products can be composted, since they are made from plants.
- Contamination can be a problem for recycling and composting. Please read the signs!

**To learn about where you can recycle just about anything in your area, visit www.earth911.org/master.asp?sls&a=recycle&cat=1*

**If you are not sure whether you can recycle an item, visit www.recycletompkins.org before throwing it away.*

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS

- **Think about and role-model the three Rs** – *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*
- **Think about where you’re buying from and support local business** – *buy pizza from local pizzerias instead of national chains*
- **Think about what kind of food you’re buying** – *try organic and locally grown produce*
- **Think about bringing cloth bags to transport your groceries** – *if you get plastic bags, recycle them*
- **Think about the packaging** – *buy in bulk to reduce plastic consumption*
- **Think about consumption and waste** – *try to execute zero-waste programs; instead of plastic cups, ask residents to bring reusable bottles and mugs*
- **Think about how you’re getting there** – *walk instead of driving; take the bus; carpool*

- **Think about how you're advertising** – *e-mail advertisements; recycle or reuse old advertisements for new ads*
- **Think about the clean-up** – *compost at Trillium or Hasbrouck; take a few extra minutes to sort recycling from trash*

SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS

- **Have new residents sign the “Cornell Sustainability Pledge”** – Pick up a copy at the table for Cornell’s Office of Energy & Sustainability during the Resource Fair or e-mail kca27@cornell.edu for more information.
- **Hold “The Sustainability is Right” Game show (a la “The Price is Right”)-** Have residents guess the impact of sustainable living practices and offer small prizes! Contact alg224@cornell.edu for the game show materials and tips.
- **“Sustainable Dorm Room Challenge”-** Volunteer your room as a visual demonstration and set it up with various unsustainable aspects. Have students try to find/fix all of the unsustainable practices of the room and offer small prizes to whoever can find them all! Contact alg224@cornell.edu for the list of unsustainable practices and tips.
- **Recycling Room Trip** – Show residents how to use your recycling center
- **Dump ‘N Run** – Bring residents in August and encourage them to donate in May
- **Bright Idea!** – Switch incandescent light bulbs for new compact florescent bulbs
- **Farmers Market trips:** www.ithacamarket.com
- **GreenStar trips:** <http://www.greenstar.coop/>
- **Cooking with local foods**
- **Vegetarian or vegan cooking**
- **Sustainability 101: Intro to the THREE Rs**
- **Design your own recycling receptacles**
- **Start a composting program** – contact Doug Lockwood (dhl34)
- **Plant flowers or edible plants**
- **Take a tour of Tompkins County Solid Waste Disposal Center**
- **Community service fundraiser** – Donate funds to environmental organization
- **Trash to treasure** – Reuse old items to make something new
- **Project RRRunway** – Design contest using old, worn-out clothing
- **Sculpture contest** – Use recyclables only
- **Volunteer at Cornell’s student-run organic farm, Dilmun Hill:** <http://hort.cals.cornell.edu/cals/hort/about/dilmun-hill/index.cfm>
- **Sponsor a Campus Sustainability Day (October 22nd) or Earth Day (April 22nd) event**

- **Take Ecological Footprint Quiz:** <http://www.myfootprint.org/>
- **Volunteer for upcoming community events** – contact Sustainable Tompkins
- **Attend Eco House’s annual production of Dr. Seuss’ *The Lorax***
- **Take residents to the Beebe or Cayuga Lake** – Pick up garbage while you’re there
- **Volunteer for Into the Streets in the fall-** Contact the Cornell Public Service Center
- **Volunteer for Slope Day** – Thousands of water bottles to pick up and recycle!
- **Bring in an established educational program** – Like the Raptors program
- **Cycling Skills course** – contact Lois Chaplin (lec4) or Susan Powell (smp16)
- **TCAT routes, bus passes, getting around Ithaca** – contact Spring Buck (scb23)
- **TCAT info for students looking to live off campus** – contact Spring Buck (scb23)
- **Promote Ithaca CarShare** – Cornell’s Transportation Office provides free Ithaca Carshare memberships to all students who wish to join, and who are eligible. Cars can be found at three convenient locations on campus. Visit www.ithacacarshare.org for information.
- **Post “Turn off lights” signs in bathrooms, kitchens, common areas, etc.**
- **Turn off lights when doing your rounds**
- **Outreach programs** – Informational posters, bulletin boards, etc. Use recycled paper!
- **Start a “Sustainability Film Series” for your dorm-** Contact kca27@cornell.edu for a list of sustainability film ideas and guest speakers to invite.
- **Organize a trip to Cornell Outdoor Education’s Hoffmann Challenge Course** – Contact the Cornell Team & Leadership Center at <http://ctlc.cornell.edu/> to visit the Ropes Course for an exciting, experiential Sustainability Leadership program with your residence hall.
- **Promote Sustainability Events during Orientation Week-** Contact kca27@cornell.edu for a listing of sustainability festivals, free film screenings, the Dump & Run Sale, discussions, and a Beebe Lake clean-up during 8/20-8/24.

WANT TO HAVE AN EVEN GREATER IMPACT?

TRY THESE LONG-TERM PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES!

- **Organize a “LIGHTS OFF CORNELL” Team with your hall-** Lights Off Cornell is an energy conservation initiative under Cornell’s Office of Energy & Sustainability, which aims to mobilize students to decrease energy consumption on campus. Pairs of students turn off lights after hours in assigned buildings on campus, helping to save energy, money, and our planet.

Try it out! Sign up as an individual student on the website:

www.sustainablecampus.cornell.edu/lightsoff

Make it a team project! Have a point person from your hall contact Natalie Zandt, nmz5@cornell.edu, to arrange a regular volunteer schedule, so that you can volunteer with

your floor mates on a regularly scheduled date. Pick one day of the week to send 2 member volunteers. Assigned date schedules will be made on a first come, first serve basis.

OR, Start up a Lights Off program in YOUR dorm! Contact nmz5@cornell.edu for tips on bringing this energy conservation initiative to your residence hall.

- **Create an ENERGY STAR Showcase Dorm Room:**
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=higher_ed.bus_dormroom
- **Organize an Energy Reduction contest** – Between residents, floors, or whole communities. Contact Engineers for a Sustainable World for tips: <http://www.rso.cornell.edu/esw/>
- **Create an extended recycling station for your floor/kitchenette** - Add glass, plastic, and/or metal containers. “Extended stations” are the responsibility of the floor/community for monitoring and removal (not included in custodial duties). With help from the professional staff, your input and student support, together you can design a system that will meet your needs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY AND WAYS TO GET INVOLVED, VISIT:

Sustainability at Cornell: <http://www.cornell.edu/sustainability>

Cornell Sustainable Campus: Get a copy of the “Student Sustainability Guide” and learn about student organizations here <http://www.sustainablecampus.cornell.edu/getinvolved/getinvolved.cfm>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ithaca-NY/Sustainability-at-Cornell/161477558483>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/SustainCornell>

Cornell’s Office of Energy and Sustainability: Contact Dan Roth, dnr6@cornell.edu, Sustainability Coordinator

E-mail sustainability@cornell.edu for a weekly news blast

Cornell Center for a Sustainable Future: Check out cutting-edge research www.sustainablefuture.cornell.edu

The Green Resource Hub’s Business Directory: <http://www.greenresourcehub.org/directories>

Tompkins County Sustainability Map: <http://maps.sustainabletomkins.org/>

Finger Lakes Climate Fund for offsetting travel: <http://fingerlakesclimatefund.org/>

ENERGY STAR for Higher Education:

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=higher_ed.bus_highereducation

Play a Greater Part – Healthier Planet, Campuses, Communities, and Economics:

<http://www.playagreaterpart.org/>

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education: <http://www.aashe.org/>