

Reduce Your Paw Print



Sustainability Manual



Endorsed by:



Contents

- [Introduction to Sustainability](#)
- [Sustainability at Northwest](#)
- [Specific Strategies](#)
- [Reduce, Reuse, Recycle](#)
- [Making Your Event Green](#)
- [Why Unplug?](#)
- [Sustainability Pledge](#)

Updated: December, 2008

Introduction to Sustainability

Conservation vs. Efficiency

- “Conservation” means avoiding using energy unnecessarily. A good example would be turning off the lights when nobody is in the room. It’s generally the cheapest way of saving energy, but requires support from building occupants and other University staff.
- “Efficiency” means doing the same thing with less energy. For instance, replacing incandescent bulbs with CFLs gives the same light with 25% of the energy use.

Source: New York University Sustainability Office - www.nyu.edu/sustainability

Sustainability at Northwest

- After 25 years of operation, approximately \$12,500,000 in savings has resulted from the use of alternative fuel sources as compared to purchasing natural gas and oil. These savings have been reallocated into the University’s instructional programs and provided a portion of the funding needed to bring faculty, administrative, professional and support staff salaries to market-based levels.
- Heat and cool over 2,300,000 sq. ft. of campus space serving 6,600 students.
- Reducing the University’s dependence on petroleum-based fuels (natural gas and heating oil) has been a goal for over 25 years. Beginning in 1982, choice of fuels incrementally shifted to alternative materials—wood chips (1982), pelletized paper (1992) and animal waste blended with dry feedstocks (2001)—from sources found in Missouri and adjacent states.
- By using wood chips, paper pellets and pellets from animal waste, Northwest has been meeting 80-85% of its energy needs without reliance on petroleum-based fuels.
- In 2006-07 355.39 tons of clean paper/corrugated paper from the campus and 1,471.41 tons from the community for a total of 1,826.70 tons pelletized; roughly 2.5 tons of plastic were recycled.
- For the past four years starting in 2004-05, Northwest students have competed with students from other colleges and universities across the nation in a program called “Recyclemania,” finishing 4th, 5th, 7th and 2nd respectively in the rate of recycling of waste paper per person.

Source: Northwest Missouri State University
November, 2008

- “... the University first began collecting wastepaper for conversion into pelletized fuel used to generate energy to heat and cool the campus in 1993.”
- “The University currently collects about a ton of bottles a week, or approximately 12 cubic yards, in addition to converting 10-13 tons of paper and cardboard into fuel pellets.”
- “Northwest produces about 15 tons of non-recycled waste a week, which means current recycling levels prevent almost half of the University’s total trash and refuse output from ending up in a landfill.”

Source: Northwest News: November 19, 2008, Quote from Associate Director of Environmental Services Lezlee Johnson, www.nwmissouri.edu/universityrelations/news/newsreleases/081118recyclebins.htm

Specific Strategies

Education

- (Offices & Residential) Sustainability Week
 - Campuses nationwide celebrated Sustainability Week on October 20-25, 2008. Begin planning for next year's event!
 - Have your RA staffs complete their interaction journal by spreading the word about sustainability.
 - Have your RA staff provide Room Sustainability Audits to each resident and assist them to develop a plan to improve sustainability within their own room to become "Green Crib Certified." Materials are available on the Res. Life shared drive.
 - Do a "Turn Out the Lights" week
 - **Who says things aren't more fun in the dark?** Lights account for a significant portion of Northwest's energy usage. Over the last year, Northwest has been replacing lights and fixtures with more energy efficient equipment. Now it's your turn to take a fun opportunity to reduce the juice! Take a week long pledge to turn off the lights in your room for just one short week.
 - **Ways to get around turning your lights on:** Use natural lighting, open a door and use the light from the hallway, go to study where lights are already on, go to the bathroom to get ready, go to study and computer labs, and I bet you will think of many more!
- (Offices) Eco-friendly email signatures... Add the following to your email signature line:



Please consider the environment before printing this email

- (Offices & Residential) Advertising campaign.
 - Place signage above all recycling containers detailing what can and cannot be recycled in this location.
 - Place "Reduce Your Paw Print... RECYCLE!" signs on trash cans.
 - Bathroom toilet stalls make for great locations for some reading about sustainability.
 - Do a bulletin board.
 - Utilize existing newsletters to publish sustainability tips as they relate to the subject matter of the newsletter. For example, the PERT "Technically Speaking" newsletter could feature a blurb about locations to recycle used electronics.

Appliances

- (Residential) Air-dry your hair. Blow dryers are some of the most energy-intensive appliances you're likely to use.
- (Residential) Use handheld razors and toothbrushes instead of electric ones.
- (Residential) Keep your fridge filled. It's actually more efficient, and wastes less energy on cooling dead air.
- (Residential) Minimize the amount of time that the fridge door is open.
- (Residential) Make sure to only heat as much hot water as you're going to use when cooking.
- (Residential) Cool any cooked leftovers to room temperature before placing them in the fridge.

- (Office & Residential) Connect your appliances and electronics to a power strip, and turn them off when not in use. Flipped of power strips waste no phantom energy. 5% of domestic energy consumption comes from so-called “vampire power.”
- (Office & Residential) Turn off and unplug everything when you are gone for weekends and breaks.

How much you use in the bathroom

Hair-dryer: 1875 Watts	Electric razor: 50 Watts
Hair straightener: 35-75 Watts	Electric toothbrush: 7 Watts
Curling Iron: 100 Watts	

How much you use in the kitchen

Electric Oven: 1500-2400 watts	Toaster: 800-1400 watts
Electric Stove: 1000-1500 watts	Microwave: 750-1100 watts
Coffee-maker: 900-1200 watts	Blender: 600 watts

How much you use in the living room

Air Conditioning: 2000 watts	Printer: 100 watts
Standard (incandescent) light bulb: 60-100 watts	Fan: 50 watts
Compact fluorescent light bulb: 13-20 watts	Iron: 1000-1800
Stereo: 20 watts	TV: 40-150 Watt (3-5 when off but still plugged in)
Cell phone charger: 1 watt	Video game box: 10 Watt (1 when off)
Laptop charger: 60 Watt	DVD player: 20-25 Watt (2 to 7 when off)
Phone: 5 watts	

Around Campus

- (Office & Residential) Take the stairs instead of the elevator – especially if you’re only going a few flights. Besides, it’s good exercise!
- (Office & Residential) Don’t use the automatic door openers unless you truly have the need.

Computers & Electronics

- (Offices & Residential) Recycle inkjet cartridges:
 - The university benefits from turning in cartridges for recycling as it helps keep costs down.
 - Used cartridges are recycled through the Materials Distribution Center (MDC). Residence hall front desks serve as a collection point.
- (Offices) Turn usable computer and electronic equipment into surplus if it can be reused.

Tech Waste:

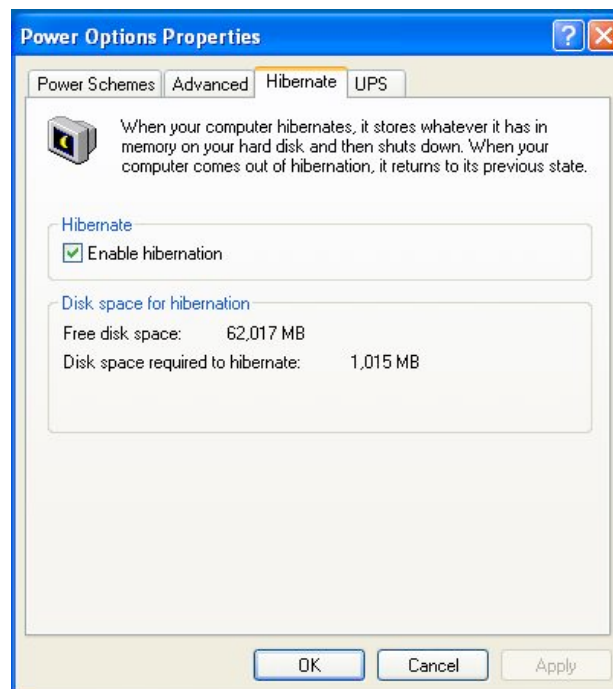
- ❖ The National Safety Council estimates that nearly 63 million computers became obsolete in 2005.
- ❖ The average lifespan of a computer has fallen from 4.5 years to an estimated two years in 2005.
- ❖ An estimated 10.2 million used computers are exported from the U.S. each year. Most end up in countries that have less stringent environmental laws than in the U.S.
- ❖ It is estimated that Americans own more than 500 million TVs (working and non-working) in the U.S. The CRT (cathode ray tube) in a TV monitor can contain up to four pounds of lead.

Source: Basel Action Network as cited at www.e-cycle.org (October, 2008)

- (Residential) Cell phones – Can be dropped off at the Student Services Desk in the Administration building.
- (Offices & Residential) Rechargeable batteries - Can be recycled through Scott Walk, NW Health & Safety Manager. Residence hall front desks serve as a collection point.
- (Residential) Wondering what to do with all the broken, used up, and unwanted stuff accumulating in your home? In some cases, you can take it back to a store. A growing number of retailers are offering programs that make it easy for you to responsibly recycle castaways. So, next time you go shopping consider packing more than just your reusable shopping bags. Here's a sampling of some national programs.
- As of November, 2008, Sam's Club (there is one in St. Joseph) will take used electronic equipment and issue a Sam's gift card in the amount of the value of the used item.
- Other stores that will recycle items:
 - **Best Buy** takes cell phones, rechargeable batteries, and ink jet cartridges at all its U.S. stores. You can learn about its weekend recycling events and other programs at the company's website.
 - **Home Depot** has a recycling program for compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), cell phones, and rechargeable batteries available at all of its stores in the continental U.S. and Canada.
 - **Office Depot** will give you a \$3 coupon for every ink or toner cartridge you bring in. Drop off old cell phones and rechargeable batteries for free. For other tech trash, Office Depot sells Tech Recycling boxes (for \$5, \$10, or \$15 depending on size) that you can fill with an unlimited amount of electronics and hand back. Check out its website for more details and other recycling programs.
 - **Radio Shack** accepts old cell phones and rechargeable batteries. They also have an online program that's worth looking at.
 - **Staples** offers free recycling for smaller electronics (like cell phones, PDAs, and rechargeable batteries) and computer peripherals (such as mice, key boards, and computer speakers). Bring in your old computer, printer, or other office technology and pay a \$10 fee for recycling. You'll also get \$3 in Staples Rewards when you recycle HP, Lexmark or Dell ink and toner cartridges.
 - Try searching **Earth 911's** extensive database for other local options.
- (Offices & Residential) Buy Energy Star Equipment
 - Energy Star offers the most comprehensive electronics rating system out there. They rate all kinds of electronics and appliances, including home and business items.
 - If you have any role or involvement in purchasing in your department, make sure that your office is purchasing Energy Star equipment including computers, printers, fax machines, scanners, etc.
- (Offices & Residential) Computer Energy Saving Modes vs. Screensavers
 - First of all, screensavers are **not** an energy saving option— the computer and flatscreen are still consuming full power. Screensavers can sometimes actually keep your computer from going into a power saving mode! But here's what you can do...
 - **Enable the Power Management features of your monitor:**
 - **Hibernate mode** – when you "hibernate" the computer, it will make a copy of what's in its memory and save it to the hard drive. When you start it back up, it

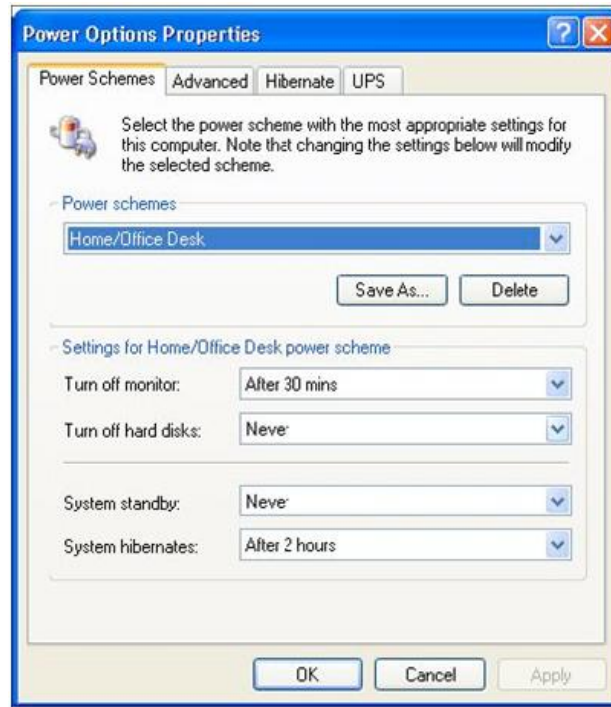
will quickly restore from this copy--all your files, emails, and windows will be open just as they were when it went into hibernation. This mode consumes about 1.5 watts. **"Hibernate" is the recommended option for week days.**

- **Shutdown mode** – when you shut down the computer, it closes everything and turns off. This provides the computer an opportunity to clean up all the memory and minimizes computer malfunction. **"Shutdown" is the recommended option for weekends.**
- **Standby mode** – when your computer is in standby or "sleep" mode, it will wake up quickly if you jiggle the mouse or tap the space bar. During standby it consumes about 2 watts.
- **The best energy saver** is to make sure your computer and peripherals like printers/scanners are turned off when you leave work every day. Consider using a "power switch" as an easy-off option to avoid "phantom loads"!
- **Setting Hibernate Mode** - To put your computer in Hibernate mode (Windows XP):
 - Step 1: First, make sure your computer is capable of hibernation. Click on the "Start" menu -> Settings -> Control Panel -> Power Options. (If you can't find it, look under "Control Panel -> Performance and Maintenance".) Select the **"Hibernate"** tab and make sure the "Enable hibernation" box is checked.



- Step 2: Go back to the "Power Schemes" tab. Set the settings as you see below: Turn off monitor after 30 minutes, Hibernate after 2 hours. This is so if you leave your office for an hour or longer, the monitor will turn off. You will need to move the mouse or press any key for it to become active. But if you're gone for more than two hours, the PC will put itself into a deep energy saving mode. When you are back in the office, press the power button of the PC for the PC to turn back on to its active state.

- **Advanced (optional):** go to the Advanced tab. You can also change what the power button on your desktop does for convenience--if you set it to Hibernate, then when you leave for the night, all you have to do is press one button.



- **Note** – As with any technology, it is recommended that you take precautions in case Hibernate mode doesn't work for you - some users or certain computer systems may experience problems or freezing when using Hibernate mode. If you were working on an important document or project, please make sure that you save and close the document before you leave your office. Then if there are any problems, you will not lose any unsaved information. If you have any trouble, we suggest you try using "Sleep" mode, which still saves most of the energy, but may avoid any of the Hibernate mode problems you run into.
- If you use a power strip for your electronics, make sure you turn off each item before turning off the power strip. Otherwise, when you turn the power strip back on, an initial surge of energy will go to each unit and will waste considerable energy.

Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC)

- (Office & Residential) If you're not in control of your room's HVAC and it's an uncomfortable temperature, call Environmental Services at x1183.
- (Offices & Residential) If you have control over your office or room temperature, make sure you use "setbacks" at night and consider setting the temperature a degree or two higher in summer and lower in winter.
- (Offices & Residential) Use a portable fan when you are warm instead of an air-conditioner on cooler days.
- (Offices & Residential) Turn off your air conditioner or turn the unit's fan speed on low when you are leaving the room for extended periods of time such as class, evenings, and weekends.

- (Offices & Residential) Don't use space heaters to warm up offices and rooms when it is too cold during the summer; try to work with the building manager to get your office cooled properly first.
- (Offices & Residential) Shades and blinds: in winter, open shades and blinds during daylight hours to help warm rooms. In summer, close ones exposed to direct sunlight to prevent the room from heating.
- (Office & Residential) If it's cold in your room or office, put on more layers before turning the heat up.

Laundry

- (Residential) Only do full loads of laundry – make the water and energy go as far as possible. Be careful not to overstuff laundry machines! This can cause mechanical problems with the machines.
- (Residential) 80-90 percent of the energy that goes into washing a load of laundry in hot water is used to heat the water. Try washing in warm or cold water.
- (Residential) Try air-drying your clothes. Put a drying rack next to your heater or, on a sunny day, in front of the window.

Lighting

- (Office & Residential) Turn off your lights when you leave the room, even if it's only for a short period of time.
- (Office & Residential) Reduce overhead lighting by using a desk or floor lamp (with an energy efficient bulb, of course!) whenever possible.
- (Office & Residential) Unplug everything you can when it's not in use. Many appliances still pull a small amount of power, even when they are turned off. Over time, this can add up.
- (Office & Residential) Make sure lights are turned off at night, including hallways.
- (Office & Residential) Install motion sensors, in place of light switches, in areas where it is prudent.
- (Office & Residential) Use natural sunlight and turn off unneeded lights where possible.
- (Office & Residential) Switch all your incandescent bulbs with low-mercury compact fluorescent bulbs – they're 3-5 times more efficient, and last 10 times as long.
- (Residential) Turn hallway lights off during quiet hours. Each hallway in the residence halls have certain lights that stay on at all times. The rest can be turned off to signify that quiet hours is in effect, yet leave enough light to safely walk at night. Review which lights in your building should be turned off and add them to your duty log checklists.

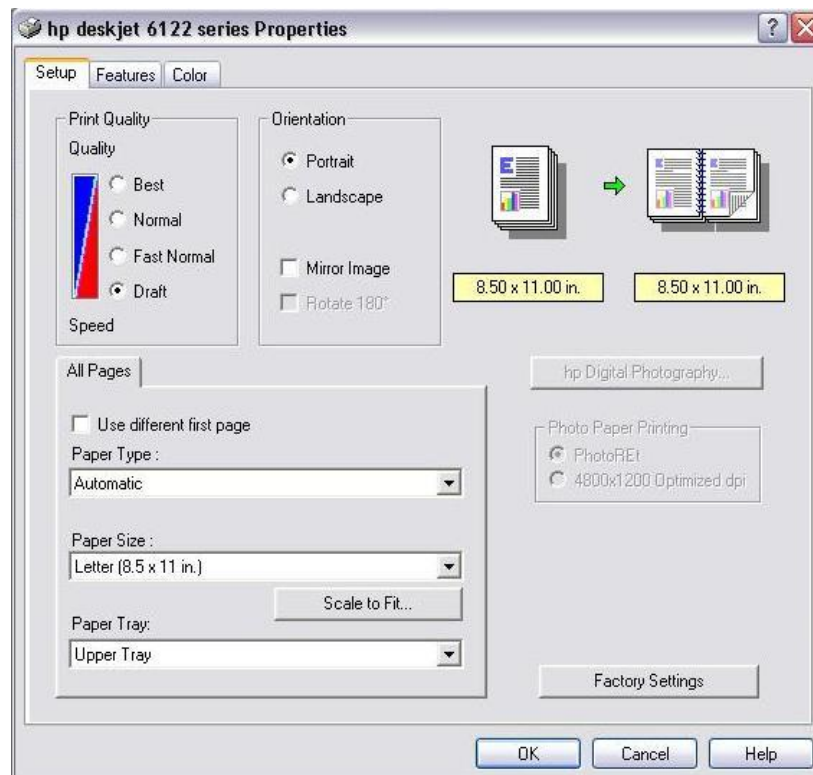
Paper Reduction

- (Offices & Residential) Opt to receive magazine and newspaper subscriptions online.
 - This allows you to use your PC or laptop to view periodicals rather than have a hard copy. If you keep issues for a while before tossing, this can also work for you. Most of the digital formats are stored on your computer for viewing later as well or for viewing on your bus or train commute. Though there are several formats, they all work the same way: you download the magazine and then view it or save it for later viewing. Many of the magazines look and "flip" to the next page like a regular magazine and some allow you to make notes on the articles you like.
 - If you really miss the feel of paper, many allow you to print an article for sharing.

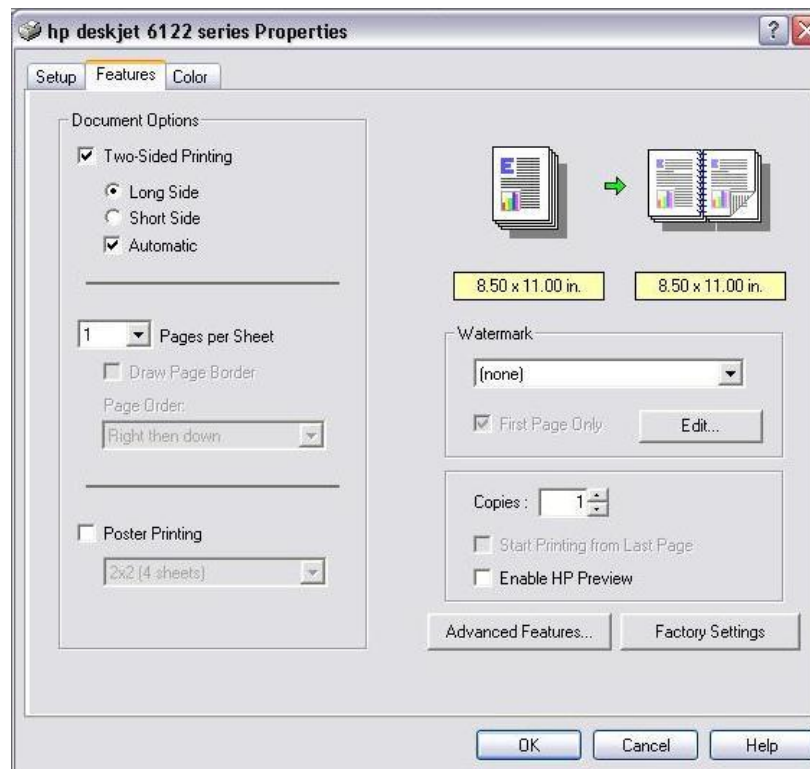
- Interested? Here are some sites that offer digital formats: www.zinio.com, www.qmags.com. Check with your favorite magazine publisher to see this better way to stop the paper flow.”
- Student Affairs publications available in electronic format:
 - ACUHO-I Talking Stick
 - The Chronicle of Higher Education weekly newspaper
- (Offices & Residential) Check printers, fax machines, and photocopiers in your area to make sure your department is using 30% post-consumer content recycled paper.
- (Offices & Residential) Check your default settings on printers and photocopiers:
 - Settings should default to “Auto duplex” (double-sided) mode.
 - Printers should default to print in “draft” quality and photocopiers default to print slightly lighter than normal (+1).
 - To change default settings for most inkjet printers, click on the printer icon in your system tray.



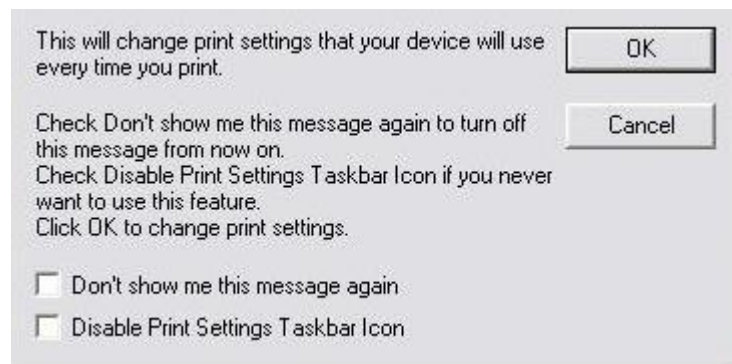
- Print quality will be found under the “Set-up” tab. Click the “Draft” radio button.



- Double sided printing will be found under the “Features” tab. Check the “Two-Sided Printing” box and choose “Long-Side.”



- Once you adjust these settings, you will be notified that changing these settings will apply every time you print. Choose “Ok.”



- (Office) Make sure you are buying recycled toner cartridges. This may or may not be possible depending on whether the MDC will work with us on this. Though it may seem small, this action has a big environmental impact. There is no difference in performance between regular and recycled toner cartridges.

Offices

- (Office & Residential) Make sure appliances and office machines are turned off at night and on weekends.
- (Office) Use the “Office Power Savings Checklist” for an easy daily reminder of what should be shut off when the office is empty.

Office Power Savings Checklist: Reduce your Paw Print in the Workplace!

In the evening:

- ✓ All lights off
- ✓ Copiers turned completely off
- ✓ Set back manual thermostats (warmer in the summer, cooler in the winter)
- ✓ Shut down computers, or set to hibernate, and lock access
- ✓ Printers and other office equipment turned off
- ✓ Turn off power strips for desktop equipment
- ✓ Shut blinds and/or curtains
- ✓ Close any open windows

In the morning:

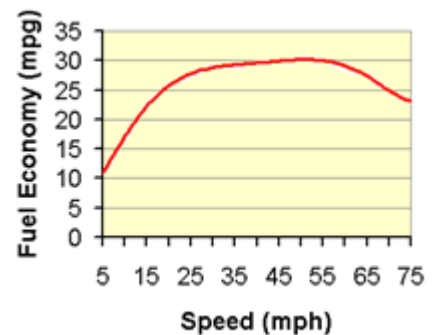
- ✓ Turn lights on as needed—get the most out of natural light
- ✓ Turn on copiers and put in power/energy save mode
- ✓ Double check thermostat settings, and set at a comfortable level
- ✓ Computers, printers and other office equipment turned on as needed
- ✓ Open blinds and/or curtains
- ✓ Open windows, if possible, if this does not conflict with automatic heating/cooling

Do this once, reap the benefits:

- ✓ Get a plant or two to suck up carbon dioxide and provide fresh air
- ✓ Stock your office with reusable dishes and silverware so you don't have to throw away plastic utensils
- ✓ Remove unnecessary appliances, or see if common appliances can be shared (coffee pots, pencil sharpeners, etc)

Travel

- (Office & Residential) Unless you are transporting goods, walk instead of driving when traveling on campus. It saves gas and is good exercise.
- (Office & Residential) Gas Mileage Tips
 - Follow posted speed limits (especially when traveling on University business). Your gas mileage rate will improve, saving the University money.
 - Car pool when feasible. If it's going to be a big programming week, work with your fellow staff to combine trips.
 - Observe the speed limit:
 - While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph.
 - You can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.24 per gallon for gas.
 - Observing the speed limit is also safer.
 - Fuel economy benefit: 7%-23%.
 - Equivalent gasoline savings: \$0.20-\$0.67/gallon
 - Drive sensibly:



- Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town.
 - Sensible driving is also safer for you and others, so you may save more than gas money.
- Use overdrive gears:
 - When you use overdrive gearing, your car's engine speed goes down. This saves gas and reduces engine wear.
- Use cruise control:
 - Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.
- Avoid excessive idling:
 - Idling gets 0 miles per gallon.
 - Cars with larger engines typically waste more gas at idle than do cars with smaller engines.
- Remove excess weight:
 - Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your MPG by up to 2%. The reduction is based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the vehicle's weight and affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones.
 - Fuel economy benefit: 1-2%/100 lbs.
 - Equivalent gasoline savings: \$0.03-\$0.06/gallon

Water: Reduce Usage and Waste

- (Offices & Residential) Replace the bottled water coolers with tap-mounted water filters and putting it into containers for use for distribution. A good filter setup is still more energy-efficient than shipping hundreds of pounds of water. The larger Brita filters are square and hold a large amount of water so they can be filled at night. This also Eliminates hassle of ordering and switching out the 5G plastic bottles.
- (Offices & Residential) If you haven't already, **consider purchasing a refillable water bottle** to make drinking tap water easier. We recommend stainless steel bottles, which won't leach harmful chemicals if heated or after long use.
- (Offices & Residential) Report leaks! Be diligent about checking for and reporting leaks in bathrooms and other facilities.
- (Residential) Take fewer and shorter showers, with cooler water.
- (Residential) Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or soaping your hand/face.
- (Residential) If you have a dishwasher, only run full loads.
- (Residential & Office) If you do dishes by hand fill the sink with water. Running water is very wasteful. Make sure to only turn on the hot water when you need it.
- (Residential & Office) Do not use toilets as a trashcan. Each flush uses 5-7 gallons of water.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Reduce

The most important way to tackle waste is simply to avoid making it. If you don't produce it, you don't have to dispose of it.

Easy ways to reduce waste:

- Think before you print. Use USB flash drives or other drives to save work you've generated on your computer, and utilize email to send documents and memos (colleagues are less likely to misplace them anyhow, and you'll have a record of sending them out). This works great if you are doing a presentation with handouts. Take email addresses of those who are interested and send the handouts electronically rather than hauling all that paper to the presentation. Your audience will then be freed up to listen to what you have to say rather than worry about taking notes.
- If you need to print, print and copy double-sided—many office printers and copiers can “auto-duplex”.
- Reduce your margin settings so that your printer uses less paper.
- To conserve even more ink, print in draft mode. It will generally lighten the shade, but you'll still be able to read your copy clearly.
- Download your software. More than 30 billion CDs are sold annually – enough to wrap around the earth. That's 5 CDs produced each year for each person on the planet. With more than 1 billion unwanted computer disks being thrown away each year, that's a huge amount of waste, not to mention the packing material—55 million boxes. Most software, including most mainstream “for-pay” productivity and office software, can be downloaded online.
- Drop off plastic shopping bags to the residence hall front desks where they will be returned to in-store recycling drop off locations.
- Use cloth shopping bags that can be reused!
- Bring a zero-waste lunch to work in a reusable container. This has a two-fold benefit: you cut down on waste from take-out, and reuse what you bring.
- Bring and keep mugs and silverware in the office to reduce use of plastic ware and paper cups.

Reuse

Reusing materials is another way to avoid waste in the first place.

Easy ways to reuse:

- Keep a box of scrap paper available in the office for writing notes.
- Print draft or informal documents on the back of once-used paper instead of using a clean sheet.
- Bring dishware and silverware to the office to use in the break-room.
- Instead of throwing away old documents, shred them and reuse them as packing material.
- When you get shipments in, save your boxes so that you can use them again for shipments out.

Recycle

- Check that appropriate bins are placed in convenient locations at your workplace. Bins that are difficult to see, are not easily accessible, or improperly labeled are less likely to be used.
- Make sure your colleagues know what can and cannot be recycled, and encourage them to recycle whenever possible.
- Make sure recycling bins are clean. If the smallest bit of trash makes its way into a recycling bin, everything in it may be contaminated and rendered unrecyclable. This is especially an issue with greasy food waste, which ruins paper for recycling.
- Make sure recycling bins are in good condition—all bins should be clean, with proper sticker labels on the top and sides. Stickers should be in good condition and affixed parallel to the bin. Believe it or not, studies show that small details like the angle of the sticker actually affect how much people recycle!
- Work with your Hall Councils to start a trash takeout program. Charge residents \$1 per bag of trash. Encourage them to separate recyclables into individual bags which will be removed free of charge. Save the environment and enjoy the benefits of a great fundraiser!
- Recycle a few things you haven't thought of before:
 - **The UPS Store** accepts clean packaging peanuts for reuse at many of their locations. Each franchise is individually owned so you should call your local store before making the trip.
 - **Wal-Mart** takes plastic bags, used car batteries, motor oil, and oil filters at all of its locations.


Recycling Tidbits

Aluminum: By the Numbers

- It only takes **60 DAYS** for a recycled aluminum can to get back on the shelf
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for **3 HOURS**
- The number of aluminum cans recycled last year could fill the Empire State Building **24 TIMES**
- The U.S. recycled enough aluminum cans to stretch to the moon and back **8 TIMES**
- Approximately **60,000** aluminum cans are recycled every **30 SECONDS**
- Aluminum cans can be recycled **FOREVER!**

Source: <http://www.recycleyourcans.org>, Source: The Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers.

Tips for Recycling Plastic

- Recycle all bottles labeled #1 or #2 that have a recycle  sign on the bottom.
- Remove labels from plastic bottles before recycling them. It makes them easier to recycle.
- Rinse out bottles before recycling them.
- Remove the cap from bottles before recycling. The cap is made out of a different material and cannot be recycled.

Source: <http://www.recycleyourcans.org>, Source: The Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers.

Making Your Event Green

- Provide bins to collect and separate recyclable materials.
- Purchase materials for your event that are made from recycled goods.
- Purchase materials for your event that can be recycled after your event. **DO NOT PURCHASE STYROFOAM!!!**
- Don't over buy when purchasing food for events.
- Remember, our events are typically for fun or learning purposes, not to provide a meal. Provide enough for your planned attendance to have a treat, but don't be afraid of your numbers running high and having your event run out of food. When you're out, you're out.
- Purchasing Guidelines (source: Aramark Campus Dining – Catering)
- Drinks:
 - “Punch bowl” service: 1 gallon of drink will typically serve 12 people.
 - 2-Liter Bottles – 2 bottles should be enough for approximately 12 people.
 - When dealing with bottled or canned beverages, 1 drink per person is typically enough.
- Chips:
 - Individual sized bags - 1 bag per person.
 - *More items will be added as determined.*

Source: Aramark Campus Dining - Catering

- Advertise in advance that participants should bring their own foodware items (reusable utensils, cups/mugs, cloth napkins) to minimize disposables use. Offer a discount or prize for people who bring their own. If possible, set up convenient dishwashing stations.
- Use unbleached, recycled content or biodegradable foodware whenever possible. Some examples are:
 - Unbleached and uncoated hot & cold cups, clear “plastic” cold cups, and biodegradable straws
 - Recycled content, biodegradable bowls, trays, plates, and hinged-lid (clamshell) containers
 - Corn starch/wheat-based, biodegradable utensils
- Avoid using water from disposable plastic bottles. If you must use these, buy from a local company that sells local filtered water using a reverse osmosis process. This is preferable to spring water that's been shipped thousands of miles before reaching you.
- In order to distribute water more sustainably, ask participants to bring their own cups/bottles. If you have gate security, remind them that you are encouraging people to bring their own containers so that they are prepared if they're searching bags.
- Provide/sell recycled content water bottles, which can also serve as a promotional item for your group.
- Offer discounts on other beverages to those who bring their own containers or who use the reusable ones for sale, and advertise this in your outreach materials and event promotions.
- Consider not providing disposable cups at all, prompting participants to use reusable souvenir cups or the cups they brought with them. Be sure that signs are placed prominently reminding attendees of these options and summarizing the many environmental and social benefits of using reusables.

- Managing the waste stream starts long before your attendees are standing in front of the garbage/recycling/compost bin. Focus on the adage, “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” — in that order. Think about every item of trash, recycling or compost that might be generated at your event. Can you reduce the quantity of each? Can you promote reusable foodware that attendees bring with them? Can you eliminate paper towels entirely? Less waste means less of a need to recycle or compost.
- Create “resource recovery stations” that have recycling and compost bins in addition to trash. It is also a good idea to post signs, photos and/or samples of materials that go into each bin to help people find the right bins for their items. Place them in highly visible areas so that more people will use them.
- Station a volunteer or two at the recovery stations to assist and educate your attendees. In our experience, constant oversight is necessary to ensure that attendees dispose of items in the right bins.
- Consider displaying some of the contents in clear bags so that people will see where to place their recyclables. (It’s easy to poke holes in them to remove any misplaced items later.)
- Consider charging for parking. People will carpool much more if they have to pay to park. Consider setting a parking policy that charges more for large vehicles with few passengers. Advertise this fact in your handouts and materials so people know it in advance and can plan to carpool. Consider reducing the rate for people who have all the seats in their vehicles full. Always have a group rate to encourage carpooling and additional attendance! Have your parking managed by a local nonprofit or environmental/social justice organization in exchange for a percentage of the parking fees as a donation. This helps spread the benefit of your event to allied groups and models a positive way of encouraging sustainable transportation.
- Use only high-content recycled, non-chlorine bleached, and tree-free paper for your brochures, flyers, posters, signs, handouts, etc. Use soy-based inks for printing. Note this info on your materials!
- Minimize paper use by using e-mail, listservs, phone banks, and your website to promote your event.
- Online registration/RSVPs for the event should be used whenever possible to reduce paper use.
- Avoid using glossy advertising, and reduce the use of pictures wherever possible. Include a coupon, even for a token amount, on your handouts or promo pieces. This will greatly reduce the number that are thrown away, and increase attendance at your event. Consider using a tri-fold flyer (i.e., three notice to a sheet); this size is easier to put into your pocket and cuts paper usage by 2/3.
- When posting flyers or posters, use transparent, biodegradable cellulose tape instead of acetate tape.
- Whenever possible, buy from manufacturers and suppliers as close to home as possible. This saves energy and supports local job creation.
- If you will be making event T-shirts, use organic cotton or hemp. Also try to confirm that the shirts are made without the use of sweatshop labor (look for the union label to be sure).
- Provide a booth with information on greening your event where participants can get the full picture about what you did and how to implement your practices in their own lives. Solicit art projects from local artists using reclaimed or recycled materials (i.e., scrap metal, old tires, glass bottles, reused fabrics, etc.) for display at your event. Encourage art projects that depict your event’s social, political, or environmental themes. Consider holding a contest for the best display!
- Rent, purchase, or find a donation of table linens and fabrics for table coverings instead of paper.

- Reuse nametag holders from event to event. Collect nametags as people are leaving.
- Attempt to utilize local speakers, artists, caterers, etc. to minimize transportation needs.
- Consider making your event smoke-free. Not only does smoking cause illness and air pollution, it wastes a great deal of energy, land, and resources. Cigarette butts, ashes, and so forth are a huge nuisance, another source of trash, and a needless fire hazard.
- Carefully choose your sponsors, making sure that their practices are in integrity with your commitments around environmental sustainability and social responsibility. Sponsorship is essentially advertising, so you should carefully consider who and what you are choosing to align yourself with as an organization.
- Organize a project (like a beach cleanup, a composting party, or creek restoration) that benefits the community and spotlights local environmental groups and issues and ways to make a difference! Donate some or all event proceeds toward an important cause.

Source: Guide to Greening Events © 2003-2006 by Circle of Life

Why Unplug?

“Enough with the polar bears already.

Global warming might be a planetary crisis, but we’ve all got more pressing things to think about. Like homework. And friends. And jobs. As it turns out, though, there’s another reason to unplug: your own sanity. That’s because many of the things you can do to save energy also happen to make you healthier, happier, and more connected to your community. So forget about the ice caps for a minute - and Facebook, and American Idol. Take a deep breath and unplug.

Do you feel drained after spending all day on the computer?

According to the US Census Bureau’s 2007 Statistical Abstract of the United States, Americans spend 8.5 hours a day watching television, using computers, listening to the radio, going to the movies or reading – more time than ever before. As a result, we’re increasingly prone to stress and illness resulting from “techno-fatigue”; in China and Korea, Internet Addiction is considered a serious and pervasive affliction. Here are some tips for combating the energy-addicted lifestyle:

- count how many hours you spend “plugged in” each day: online, on the phone, watching TV, playing a video game
- try going without TV or your iPod for a week
- when you open up your computer, set a goal of only staying on for a certain amount of time

Do you feel like you’re doing way too much?

To unplug is to simplify. Sometimes, in the quest to do it all, we end up committing ourselves to far too much – with the result that none of it gets done as well as we’d like. Think about all the activities you’re involved in, and how you might be able to cut or combine them. Talk to your friends and family about it, or, if you prefer, get in touch with the Personal Development and Counseling Center.

Does hanging out under a tree cheer you up?

According to biophilia theory, humans have a psychological need to engage with the natural world – a need that’s being met less and less. A 2006 study in the Journal of Environmental Management, for instance, found a direct link between decreased attendance at national parks and increases in the time we spend plugged into electronic entertainment.”

There’s plenty of nature around if you choose to seek it out. Here are some ways to get your green back:

- Take an excursion to one of the Mazingo or one of the many other city parks.
- Use the resources the community has to offer; there are a number of public recreational facilities all over the Maryville area and the Northwest campus. Play tennis on campus, make arrangements to do the ropes course at Mazingo, or head to the city pool.
- Check out the clouds when you’re walking to class
- Grow some plants on your windowsill!

Source: This section quoted directly from “Why Unplug?” as posted by the New York University Sustainability Task Force - November, 2008

Sustainability Pledge

Take the pledge:

- I pledge to lead a more sustainable lifestyle, which takes into account both the environmental and social impact of my actions.
- I will strive within my home, community and place of work and/or study to reduce Northwest Missouri State University's environmental impact and paw print.
- I will support and encourage others to take the pledge and, along with myself, to choose at least one action from each section below, and to continue to add new actions toward sustainability.

Please select one activity from each category. I will....

...Reduce, Reuse and Recycle the waste I create by:

- Reducing the amount of resources I purchase, consume and discard.
- Using a reusable grocery bag when shopping.
- Using reusable silverware and dishes, mugs and water bottles.
- Conserving paper.
- Subscribing to online magazines, newspapers and periodicals, instead of hard copy paper formats.
- Editing papers and documents on the computer and saving to a disk rather than printing them.
- Sending and storing documents, emails and other items electronically rather than printing and filing them.
- Printing double-sided whenever possible
- Designating a box for scrap paper that myself and others can reuse.
- Reusing envelopes by placing a new label over the old address.
- Making recycling a habit, and not a nuisance.
- Learning what I can recycle from the student handbook and recycling brochures.
- Purchasing recycled or reused products, especially those that can be recycled again.
- Finding new uses for old things, like reusing a grocery bag as a trash bag.
- Keeping in mind the lifetime of a product, and trying to reduce my use of disposable items.
- Avoiding products with excessive packaging, and looking for packaging that is recyclable or reusable.
- Donating unwanted items that are still in good condition before throwing them away.

...Conserve Energy by:

- Not running the water while I brush my teeth or shave.
- Limiting my time in the shower and using hot water sparingly.
- Doing only full loads of laundry and dishes.
- Using self-foaming soap whenever possible, or using a minimal amount of water to get soap to foam, then turning the water (back) on to rinse my hands off.
- Turning off unused or unneeded lights whenever possible.
- Using natural lighting whenever possible.
- Using compact fluorescent bulbs whenever possible, which conserve electricity and transmit less heat than incandescent bulbs.
- Avoiding decorative lighting.
- Minimizing my computer usage.

- Turning off my computer when it is not in use.
- Not using power strips to turn on computers and other electronics, but turn them on individually, so as to not create a power surge.
- Minimizing the use of screen savers and enabling power management features such as hibernation, standby or sleep mode when my computer or other electronic devices are inactive.
- Turning off my monitor and speakers when not in use.
- Safely shutting down my computer, or having it hibernate every night.
- Purchasing Energy Star appliances whenever possible.
- Turning off and unplugging all energy consuming equipment (cell phone chargers, pencil sharpeners, etc) when not in use.
- Arranging my room to place my desk or chair next to the window so I can study/work in natural light.
- Drying my clothes (sweaters, jeans, etc) on a drying rack rather than in the dryer, or placing still damp clothes on a drying rack instead of re-setting the dryer cycle for a few items.
- Setting my thermostats higher in the summer and lower in the winter.
- Dressing appropriately for the season so as to not use more heating/cooling.
- Keeping windows and outside doors in temperature controlled environments closed.

...Eat Sustainably by:

- Eating locally when possible to save transportation costs and help the local economy.
- Taking only as much as I can eat at meals, or bringing leftovers home to eat later.
- Avoiding a high meat diet, and fill my plate with more vegetables.
- Avoiding the use of disposable plates, cups, utensils and trays.
- Avoiding take-out foods that are over-packaged.
- Eating organic foods whenever possible.

...Become an eco-friendly traveler by:

- Walking, or riding my bike, skateboard, etc. rather than driving—this will save on gas, reduce air pollution, reduce parking congestion, and will allow me to be healthier physically.
- Carpooling whenever possible.
- Turning off my car rather than leaving it idle for a long period of time.
- Having my car regularly serviced for emissions checks and performance.

...Experience sustainability within the community by:

- Encouraging others to take the pledge.
- Speaking out against those who litter, or negatively impact the environment.
- Volunteering time to educate those who do not know about sustainability and what they can do to help.