



October 2012

weber green

Weber State University's Environmental Issues Committee -

Our Mission

The Environmental Issues Committee shall help facilitate the modeling of best practices for economic and environmental sustainability at WSU. The committee shall serve as a local and state-wide source for scientifically based information and for leadership on environmental issues affecting Utah, the Wasatch Front, and WSU Campus Committees.

Your Green Link

news and information

Weber State University Sees an Energy Savings of \$939,575 in FY 2012!

The many energy-efficiency projects and programs implemented at WSU are starting to pay off substantially. Last fiscal year (7/1/11–6/30/12) WSU saved \$939,575 on its combined electricity, natural gas, and water bills. Some of these savings can be attributed to behavioral changes. The Energy & Sustainability Office (E&SO) has been working closely with building managers and occupants to ensure that equipment is shut off when the building is unoccupied or that it is powered down when sparsely occupied.

Significant savings have also been realized by implementing several energy-efficiency projects. In particular, the E&SO has been working on two campus-wide multi-year projects. The first is the lighting upgrade project: Interior and exterior lights are being upgraded to high-efficiency fluorescents, CFLs, and LEDs. To date the following buildings have been completed: the library, Allied Health, Miller Administration, Education, Facilities Management, Receiving & Distribution, and the Dee Events Center. The majority of parking lot and walkway lighting at the Ogden campus, the Dee Events Center, and the Davis campus have also been upgraded.

Presently, the E&SO is upgrading the “cloud” lighting above the arena at the Dee Events Center with cutting-edge LED lights. These are expected to use less than half the energy consumed by the originals; savings will be boosted by their instant on/off and dimming capabilities.

The second large multi-year project is the steam tunnel upgrade. Beneath the Ogden campus runs a 1 ½ mile network of tunnels containing over 7,000 lineal feet of pipe that deliver steam and chilled water from the central plants to heat and cool several buildings. This vast network will become both more energy and water efficient. Expansion joints and steam traps are being replaced, isolation valves are being added, and the entire network is being re-insulated with aerogel. Aerogel is a high-performance thermal insulator used by NASA to insulate the Mars Rover and spacesuits. When applied to pipes, this product is only 10 mm thick but provides the same insulating capacity (R-value) as 3 inches of fiberglass. Thus far, about 30% of the pipes have been upgraded and reinsulated.

WSU Ranked 74th in the Nation in Sierra Club's 2012 'Cool Schools'

Weber State University is officially one of the 100 “cool schools” in the USA, according to *Sierra Club Magazine*. Hundreds of institutions of higher education were surveyed and ranked according to their measurable sustainability goals and accomplishments. All aspects of the campus dynamic, from academic programs to food services, from landscaping to energy-reduction devices, from administrative commitments to collaborations with

public agencies and non-profit organizations, were taken into account.

The Environmental Issues Committee and the Energy and Sustainability Office share credit for this national acknowledgment. The EIC has worked for years to build partnerships across campus to educate the community and help people change their behavior on campus and beyond for the sake of a healthier environment and more cost-effective use of resources.

English professor Hal Crimmel, former chair of the committee, explains: "WSU is deserving because of its unique projects that save energy and taxpayer money while showing that greening a campus can be a win-win situation for everyone — for the environment, for the state. We are also modeling practices that will help continue to make Utah a great place to live and work."

The Energy & Sustainability Office has led the energy- and cost-saving initiatives. In addition to the projects described in the article above, others include converting many university vehicles, including shuttle buses, to natural gas and installing solar panels on several buildings.

President F. Ann Millner demonstrated significant initial support by signing the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment to becoming a carbon-neutral university by 2050 back in 2007.

"This award recognizes the creative (and collaborative) work being done at WSU and provides a foundation for future work in this area," reiterates Crimmel. For a list of completed projects and those currently under way, visit weber.edu/sustainability/06_Projects.html.

WSU Launches Student Environmental Ambassadors Program

Environmental Ambassadors is a peer-to-peer educational outreach program that promotes environmental stewardship and awareness. The ambassadors are ten committed students who spread their knowledge of environmental topics, issues, and resources to other groups and students at WSU. We strive to be agents of change. Like Dr. Seuss's Lorax, "We speak for the trees!"

The "Green Move-In" was the first of many successful events the program has hosted this year. Held at University and Wildcat Villages, the Environmental Ambassadors helped set up a new recycling program in housing. We provided temporary recycling bins for movers and collected a large number of cardboard boxes to be recycled. We also went door-to-door passing out information magnets and handouts that identify all of the materials recyclable on campus.

The Environmental Ambassadors hosted an information session about recycling in Wildcat Village on Oct. 11. Recycling is important; it takes little effort and makes a huge difference! It's important for students to be committed to recycling.

If you are interested in becoming a Student Environmental Ambassador, please contact Hannah Rice, student sustainability intern, hannahrice@weber.edu.

WSU Events for Sustainability Day – October 24, 2012

Let's take out the trash! The Environmental Ambassadors along with other groups such as the Environmental Club, Geography Club, and USGBC will be gettin' dirty! The clubs are planning a public waste-sorting event to celebrate Sustainability Day. We will physically sort through trash in the Union Atrium and salvage the recycling. The goal is to demonstrate how much waste is produced that could otherwise be recycled and thus promote awareness of the need for recycling. The event will be October 24th at 11:00 a.m. in the Union Atrium.

At the waste-sorting exercise, the Energy & Sustainability Office will gather pledges from students who commit to reduce their carbon footprint. Students can pledge to lower their rate of energy consumption, re-use everyday products, and increase their recycling habits.

Following the events above, at 12:30 – 1:30 in the Wildcat Theater, there will be a keynote broadcast. "Preparing

Students for a Changing Climate” is a live panel discussion sponsored by Second Nature. Leading experts will discuss how colleges and universities can prepare students for a changing climate, society, and economy through sustainability education.

WSU Energy and Sustainability Office Offers Classroom Visits

WSU’s Energy and Sustainability Office is working hard to make WSU carbon neutral by 2050. To spread the word about its specific objectives and accomplishments, sustainability technician Justin Owen has been visiting appropriate courses. “It’s a good way to interact with WSU students. Most of our projects affect students directly, but they haven’t heard about them,” said Mr. Owen. “Since ultimately our goal of climate neutrality depends on individual behavior,” it’s important that students know how to act responsibly.

Business and Economics Professor Seeks Student Researchers

Professor Shaun Hansen (at the Goddard School of Business & Economics) has an opportunity for students interested in corporate social responsibility and related issues to participate in an academic research project that will eventually target inclusion in a top business ethics journal. Interested students should contact Dr. Hansen via email for further information: shaunhansen1@weber.edu.

Course in Design Engineering Technology Program Focuses on Sustainability in the Built Environment

Assistant Professor Jeremy Farnar is teaching a course, DET 3000, this semester that examines sustainability in the green built environment. The course topics include global issues surrounding sustainability and green building, renewable energy, consideration of how green building can be integrated into new and existing construction, the comparison of conventional and green construction practices, short- and long-term costs and benefits of green building, as well as the history, current technologies, and emerging trends of green building. Software will be used to run analyses of power use and generation in addition to other design decisions found within sustainability in the built environment.

Two field trips, open to any students, have been coordinated (October 12 and November 1) through the DET program and the WSU student chapter of the United States Green Building Council to provide examples of sustainable development and green building. The first trip was to the Daybreak development to hear from the architects about development and big picture items they are doing to promote sustainable living in their community. Participants also went to the model home park and toured several houses that Garbett Homes has built to showcase how they have positioned the business as the premier green builder in Utah. The second field trip will be to the Utah House in Kaysville, a home that showcases several green building practices.

WSU Composts!

Through a partnership between Facilities Management, the Shepherd Union, and Sodexo, WSU has made composting food waste on campus possible. This summer a large composting bin (AKA the Earth Tub) was installed near the loading dock of the Shepherd Union Building. The Shepherd Union staff purchased the tub, Facilities Management installed it, and Sodexo will be maintaining and managing the composting process. Currently Sodexo is composting all pre-consumer food waste (i.e. kitchen preparation scraps). However, in the future, post-consumer food scraps (i.e. dining waste) will be composted as well. The final compost product will be used on WSU’s grounds by the landscaping department.

Reminder: Carbon Offsets Are Available Through WSU

WSU has made it possible for everyone to compensate for her/his energy consumption while supporting clean air and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The school has implemented a carbon-offset payment program for institutional divisions and individuals alike. If you as an individual are interested in offsetting your carbon emissions from travel or home energy use, you may pay into the fund, the proceeds from which will buy alternative energy for the school. Go to www.weber.edu/sustainability to calculate your carbon footprint and offset some or all of your annual carbon emissions by making a donation. Details available at http://www.weber.edu/sustainability/carbon_calculator.html.

Turn Off Your Engines! *WSU is Idle Free* Campaign Continues

The smoke from the Idaho fires in recent weeks is a visible and cough-inducing reminder of our commonly poor air quality. However, the largest portion of the area's carbon emissions, which also contribute to poor air quality, comes from our community's daily driving habits. Do your part to reduce harmful air pollutants and turn off your engines when waiting in your car. In an effort to curb greenhouse gas emissions, save fuel, improve air quality, and thus protect our health, Weber State continues to push for an Idle-Free campus. Idling delivers 0 miles per gallon in terms of gas consumption as it pollutes the air we breathe.

You Can Recycle Batteries, Cell Phones in the Shepherd Union

If you haven't noticed yet, there are bins near the north entrance to the Union building at the "Sustainability Center"/information kiosk where you can drop off cell phones and used batteries for recycling. Do the right thing and take advantage of this great service on campus!

Upcoming Events/Announcements

EIC Sponsoring Various Events as Part of Campus *Water Works* Series

Several events have been hosted by the EIC this semester, including a panel discussion on the Great Salt Lake, a film of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, and a lecture on Utah's water future and climate by the state climatologist, and more are coming up through the year in conjunction with the campus *Water Works* series. The next scheduled EIC event is a free film screening on November 19 at 6 pm in the Wildcat Theater of *Watershed: Exploring a New Water Ethic for the New West*. This film includes positive examples of what some communities dependent on Colorado River water are doing to perpetuate the sustainability of this vast river system. Please see the *Water Works* website for a full listing of events through the year: <http://www.weber.edu/waterworks>. Many events serve as great complements to courses, so plan ahead to get your students to attend!

Campus Food Provider SODEXO Hosting Student Sustainability Challenge October 22-26

To promote sustainability related activities, SODEXO, the campus dining service, is hosting a sustainability challenge competition for students the week of October 22-26. There will be a table in the Union building with details regarding the events, challenges, and prizes. The grand prize is the bicycle (now hanging in the Union atrium)!

Mark Your Calendars for WSU's 4th Annual Intermountain Sustainability Summit

Weber State University will be hosting its 4th Annual Intermountain Sustainability Summit on February 28th and March 1st, 2013. The Intermountain Sustainability Summit is a premier event providing exceptional educational

programs, networking, and trade show opportunities for government representatives; sustainability, energy, and solid waste professionals; students; politicians; and interested public.

The upcoming Summit provides sessions in the following areas:

- Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Achieving Carbon Neutrality
- Water Conservation, Quality, and Management
- Recycling and Waste Reduction/Elimination

We are also excited to announce this year's keynote speaker, L. Hunter Lovins. L. Hunter Lovins is president and founder of Natural Capitalism Solutions (NCS) (www.natcapsolutions.org). NCS educates senior decision-makers in business, government, and civil society to restore and enhance natural and human capital while increasing prosperity and quality of life. In partnership with leading thinkers and implementers, NCS creates innovative, practical tools and strategies to enable companies, communities, and countries to become more sustainable. Trained as a sociologist and lawyer, Lovins is currently faculty at Bainbridge Graduate Institute and a key member of the Madrone Project, a non-profit effort to enhance sustainability education. She has consulted with large and small companies including the International Finance Corporation, Royal Dutch Shell, Interface, Clif Bar, and Wal-Mart. Governmental clients include the Pentagon, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, and other agencies, numerous cities, and the governments of Jamaica and Australia. She has also served as an advisor to the energy minister of Afghanistan.

One Faculty and Two Student Annual Sustainability Research Awards Available

The WSU Alumni Association is providing a \$500 award for an exceptional student sustainability research project this academic year. The Office of the Provost is providing a second \$500 student award and a \$1000 faculty award for the best faculty sustainability research project. Application submission and selection of the winners will be in spring 2013. Selection will be by members of the WSU Faculty Senate Environmental Issues Committee.

Eligible submissions include any research project involving some primary research completed in 2012-2013 having to do with sustainability. Student projects completed in conjunction with faculty research may apply but the role and work of the student needs to be clearly explained. For a definition of sustainability research at WSU see below. Watch for the call for submissions to compete for these awards in the spring semester.

Definition of sustainability research for WSU, approved by EIC November 14, 2011:

Sustainability research addresses components of sustainability (e.g., social equity, ecological health, the use of scarce resources and a belief that economic development must consider all of these) or particular goals of sustainable living (e.g., waste reduction, renewable energy, clean resources, climate change adaptation, comprehensive land use planning, or generally, the design of efficient environmental policies or regulations) as it furthers human understanding of complex interconnections between society and nature. At its core, sustainability research recognizes that human/societal and economic health is inextricably linked to a healthy natural world and the sustainable use of resources; it strives toward solutions to these challenges.

Faculty, please notify EIC of sustainability-related courses and research

In an effort to complete our listing of all sustainability-related or sustainability-focused courses taught at WSU, the EIC asks that faculty please notify the EIC Chair, Alice Mulder (amulder@weber.edu), of any courses they teach and/or research they conduct. To see the existing list of known courses and the definitions for sustainability-focused and related courses, please visit this page of the WSU's sustainability website http://www.weber.edu/environment/Sustainability_Defined.html and the Sustainability Course Inventory (linked at the bottom of the page). The definition of sustainability research for WSU is above.