



SUSTAINABILITY 2016

GREEN CAMPUS

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Take a look back at the 2015-16 academic year inside Harper's second annual sustainability report and see how Harper College is embracing the concept of sustainability. This report highlights major green initiatives and events on campus including green campus projects, student engagement and community connections. Enjoy!

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Climate Leadership: Greenhouse Gas Report



Harper College is currently in Phase One of its Climate Action Plan which runs through the year 2030. Harper's carbon emissions goal is a 25 percent reduction from the 2010 baseline data point. During FY15, gross emissions totaled 38,109.86 metric tons CO₂e. The 2015 Greenhouse Gas Report was the College's second update since

2010. Additional data was collected including college funded travel, wastewater and paper purchase data. Harper's new buildings, H and the new D addition, were added during this time. Data collection methods continue to be streamlined and standardized.

A New Way to Recycle

Harper made the transition to single stream recycling in December 2015. Single stream recycling allows all recyclable material to be commingled in the same collection container and then sorted at the plant. This transition streamlined recycling at Harper and increased efficiency, made processes easier for all users and reduced usage of bag liners. Look for the new recycle bins all across campus.

IMPACT: On campus tracking of recycling data is now underway. The Sustainability Work Group offers ongoing education of proper recycling methods.



Demand Response

A new sustainability initiative began on campus in 2015 to help lower carbon emissions, protect the electrical grid and keep electrical prices down. Throughout the summer the College agreed to reduce its electric load, if called upon, to alleviate stress on the grid. Harper utilizes this program as an opportunity to green campus operations.

IMPACT: This program inspires electric use reduction and offers rebates in return. Ten jack pine trees were planted in the Tahoe National Forest for participation.



GREEN CAMPUS



Integrated Pest Management

Harper published its first Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy in July 2015. IPM is a program that focuses on reduced risk pest control methods with a preference toward non-chemical control measures. Under this policy, Harper will utilize physical, mechanical, cultural, biological and educational tactics as primary controls. Reduced risk chemical controls will be used only when necessary.

IMPACT: This program ensures the protection of human health, maintains the integrity of campus buildings and grounds, and preserves the natural environment.

Green Cleaning

Harper changed the way the campus is cleaned. Custodial closets around campus no longer have harsh chemicals. The new cleaning system transforms ordinary tap water into a commercial cleaner by infusing it with ozone. The final product, aqueous ozone, is safe, environmentally friendly and cost effective.

The solution seeks out germs, stains and bacteria and eliminates these contaminants on contact. After the cleaning and sanitizing process, the aqueous ozone solution turns safely back into oxygen and water. One of Harper's four units is pictured above.

IMPACT: Campus users are no longer exposed to harsh chemicals and fewer chemicals end up in waterways. This system increases productivity and reduces waste.



Choose to Reuse

During the 2016 school year Harper and Sodexo partnered to provide an alternative to Styrofoam in the cafeteria. This voluntary Choose to Reuse program launched during Earth Week 2016 and allows cafeteria users to purchase a plastic reusable container for a one time-fee of \$5.00. After each use Harper will wash the container to be used again.

Styrofoam is virtually non-biodegradable, clogs our waste stream and can be deadly to animals that come across the litter in the environment. This is the first time the cafeteria has provided a reusable lunch container option. The Choose to Reuse program marks an exciting step for waste reduction on campus.

IMPACT: Harper's cafeteria now offers an alternative to Styrofoam which reduces waste and Harper's overall carbon footprint.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Student Designed Recycle Bin Labels

To help ease the transition to single stream recycling, Aaron Wagner (above left), a student from the Harper College Graphic Arts Club, along with club members Kevin Coderre (center) and Myk Little (right), designed a recycle bin label that shows the kinds of materials accepted in Harper's recycle bins. Aaron worked with the Sustainability Work Group to perfect the design making it clear and catchy. Club members Kevin and Myk assisted throughout. The process involved material photo shoots and design revisions. Thanks to the great work and creativity of these students, recycling is now a little easier and more understandable.

IMPACT: Students in the Graphic Arts Club gained real world experience working with clients to develop and design a product. Student work now appears on recycle bins across campus.



Earth Week 2016

Harper's Student Environmental Club continued its tradition of hosting a series of events to celebrate our Earth during the month of April. Earth Week 2016 succeeded in engaging students, faculty and staff in many inspiring presentations and activities. The numerous sessions included Green Cleaning at Harper, Conservation vs. Economic Growth in Kenya, Redefining Waste, Birds of Prey, Water Resources and Sustainable Gardening. Participants got their hands dirty and participated in outdoor campus clean ups and habitat restoration at a local forest preserve. The club also made birdhouses out of recycled materials to be installed in campus natural areas and partnered with the Buddhist Interest Group to host an outdoor meditation session.

IMPACT: 270+ students participated in Earth Week sessions and learned about sustainability and conservation at Harper and in their own lives.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Harper's First Zero-Waste Event

In April 2016, the Student Activities Board (SAB) hosted its first zero waste event in conjunction with their monthly Coffeehouse Concert Series. The event, featuring The Voice Artist Angie Keilhauer and three student performers, attracted over 350 participants and boasted a waste diversion rate of 70 percent. Seventy percent of the total waste generated at the event escaped the landfill through either recycling or composting. This is a huge improvement from the eight percent waste diversion rate of the same coffeehouse event the month before.

SAB worked with Sodexo, Facilities Management, campus sustainability and local non-profit Mindful Waste to put on the zero waste event. Waste was eliminated at its source by serving food on reusable trays, using bulk creamer and sugar and eliminating Styrofoam cups. SAB gave away reusable mugs and dried coffee grounds for fertilizer to further engage attendees in a zero waste mindset.

IMPACT: 350+ students, faculty, staff and community members participated and learned about how small changes can make a big impact at this student-led event. Seventy percent of the event's waste was diverted from entering the landfill.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Teaching Sustainability Summit

Each year the Office of International Education and the International Student Office host an International Education Summit on campus to discuss best practices in the future of international education. The theme of the 2016 summit was Teaching Global Sustainability Across the Curriculum. The summit brought together faculty, staff, students and community members to engage in the conversation of what sustainability means (and how the scope of the term sustainability is expanding to include not only environmental, but social, economic and cultural spheres). This summit highlighted many innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching these vital subjects in their global context.

IMPACT: 82 attendees representing Harper and five other schools learned teaching strategies for incorporating sustainability into the curriculum.

Smart Grid Lunch 'n Learn

In July 2015, the Sustainability Work Group hosted its first Lunch 'n Learn session: Whole Home Efficiency - Ways to Save Energy and Money, sponsored by the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) and Elevate Energy. This event engaged employees in a conversation on how to save energy and money in their own homes. The meeting focused on the new Smart Grid that utility companies developed to make a stronger, more reliable energy source. Attendees left with tips and next steps for utilizing the information learned at the session.

IMPACT: 35 campus users learned how to take control of their energy usage, make home energy efficiency improvements and uncover money savings.

A colorful graphic with a blue and orange background. It features a smart meter, a house, and a person. Text includes: "WHAT THE FUTURE REALLY LOOKS LIKE. A shiny new smartgrid for Illinois!", "WE USED TO THINK THE FUTURE MIGHT LOOK LIKE THIS...", "With your meter you can:", "TRACK YOUR ENERGY USAGE ONLINE", "SAVE BY RUNNING APPLIANCES AT OFF-PEAK HOURS", "SELL YOUR ENERGY BACK TO THE GRID", "Illinois Will Conserve Enough Energy To Power 150,000 Homes For A Year!", and "Learn what the smart grid means for you at: www.smartpowerillinois.org".



Trail Watch Volunteer Training

Two volunteer training sessions held at Harper in the summer of 2015 and 2016 taught participants how to become the eyes and ears for the law enforcement department out on public trails. The Forest Preserves of Cook County hosted both sessions.

IMPACT: 21 members of the Harper community were trained for Trail Watch safety - making public natural areas safer for all users.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Munch for the Planet - Inspire Action

The Sustainability Work Group at Harper began a series of Lunch 'n Learn sessions in 2016 to educate campus users about various sustainability related topics. The series kicked off with a presentation on Harper's transition to single stream recycling. The series continues to draw large crowds and topics range from recycling, to sustainable gardening, to greening your office. Experts spoke and shared their knowledge, including Eileen McArdle from ACT Recycling Solutions and the Master Gardeners from the University of Illinois Extension.



IMPACT: 130+ attendees participated in the talks during the first year and learned how to infuse sustainability ideas into their daily lives.

Ambassador School Tours - Sustainability

Sustainability joined in as being one of the regular stops for the elementary and junior high tours visiting campus. These tours engage students from Harper's Ambassador Schools to excite them about college and potential careers. Students learn about wide ranging job options relating to sustainability and exciting opportunities to get involved. The interactive presentation introduces the concept of sustainability - enough, for all, forever - and provides real world examples of what sustainable living looks like.

IMPACT: Over 1,200 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students from Harper's Ambassador Schools were introduced to the concept of sustainability and explored ways to get involved at home, at school and at play.



****Share your sustainability story!** You are doing great things in sustainability and we want to know about it! Visit harpercollege.edu/gogreen to share your story and have it highlighted in the campus newsletter, sustainability webpage or in future reports.**

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