



# BOSTON COLLEGE

## Sustainability Guide

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## What is Sustainability?

Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, directly or indirectly, on our natural environment.

To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations.

This definition implies that there are limits to the amount of available resources and the ability of the earth to absorb human activity. Such confines require the restructuring of our consumption habits to ensure a healthy life and earth for future generations.

## Sustainability Starts with You

The decisions you make every day on campus affect lives other than your own. This sustainability guide offers strategies to keep our campus and world beautiful while ensuring that the Boston College community upholds the motto “men and women for others” by becoming leaders in environmental stewardship and sustainability.



# Recycling at Boston College

We encourage practices that reduce consumption, landfill contamination and a throw-away mentality. Reducing, reusing, and recycling can help you, your community, and the environment by saving money, energy, and natural resources.

- Recycling keeps precious resources in the product cycle and stops landfills from growing.
- Recycling saves energy and money by eliminating the need for new materials.
- Most single-use materials, such as plastics, do not biodegrade. Apart from materials that are incinerated, virtually every piece of plastic ever made still exists.



## Reduce

- Bring a reusable mug to Lower of Mac to cut down on waste and receive a discount on your coffee or fountain beverage
- Use a reusable water bottle to reduce plastic waste
- Utilize bottle filling stations
- Print double sided
- Enroll in GreenToGo to reduce takeout waste from dining halls and save 10% on all purchases



## Reuse

- Use real plates and utensils in dining halls where available
- Bring cloth or reusable shopping bags for groceries
- Thrift clothing and buy used items when possible
- Donate unwanted items to charity shops
- Convert old/ worn out shirts into rags



## Recycle

- Empty (and rinse) recyclables before recycling them
- Flatten shipping boxes to take up less space
- When using a single use item, opt for a more easily recyclable material (such as aluminum or glass) when possible

## Where Can I Recycle My ... ?

	What	Where
SINGLE STREAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Glass and plastic bottles</li> <li>▪ Empty, clean cardboard food and drink containers</li> <li>▪ Aluminum cans: soda, tuna, etc.</li> <li>▪ Newspapers, magazines, junk mail, cardboard</li> </ul>	<p>Blue single stream recycling bins are distributed all around campus. Exterior bins have blue bands near the top.</p> <p>Blue recycling bins provided in all dorm rooms</p>
UNIVERSAL WASTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Batteries- Rechargeable and non-alkaline batteries only</li> <li>▪ Battery stations are in Mac second floor by the mail room and the third floor of O'Neil Library</li> <li>▪ Florescent light bulb, CFLs</li> <li>▪ Any mercury containing items</li> </ul>	<p>Batteries can be recycled at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ O'Neil Library, Level 2</li> <li>▪ St. Clement's Hall, room 212</li> <li>▪ Most resident hall laundry rooms</li> </ul> <p>For recycling information on other items, see the Environmental Health &amp; Safety website:  <a href="http://www.bc.edu/offices/publicsafety/ehs.html">www.bc.edu/offices/publicsafety/ehs.html</a></p>
E-WASTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal electronics (ex. phones/chargers, laptops/chargers, headphone/chargers, smart watches)</li> <li>▪ Computers</li> <li>▪ Printers</li> </ul>	<p>BC work related items can be recycled by putting in a work order:  <a href="http://www.bc.edu/offices/facilities/facservices/wo.html">www.bc.edu/offices/facilities/facservices/wo.html</a></p> <p>For other personal items watch for E-waste recycling events or return items to retailer where purchased</p>
INK CARTRIDGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ink cartridges for copiers and printers [Hewlett Packard (HP and others)]</li> </ul>	<p>Ink cartridges may be recycled at Staples, OfficeMax, and WB Mason, or returned to the manufacturer</p>

# Recycling in the Dining and Residence Halls

## McElroy

- Recycle all plastic to-go containers, empty plastic cups, bottles, glass, cereal boxes, milk cartons and yogurt containers in the blue recycle bins
- Throw out all trash (plastic bags, plastic utensils, dirty paper/ plastic wrappers) in the trash bins
- Food organics, napkins, teabags, and unlined paper products should be placed in the compost bins

## Corcoran Commons

- Place all trash, recycling, and tableware on the conveyor belt. It will be sorted for you

## Hillside

- Recycle all plastic cold cups, hot drink sleeves, drink lids, bottles, cans & milk cartons, etc. in the round single stream recycling hole in the wall
- Compost compostable plats, food scraps, and napkins in the slot at the wall
- Throw out drink cups with wax coated insides, straws, and wrappers

## The Chocolate Bar (Stokes)

- Recycle all items listed above in McElroy
- Throw out dirty napkins, straws, hot cups with wax coated insides and dirty paper/ plastic plates

## Lyons

- Recycle all items listed above in McElroy
- Throw out dirty napkins, straws, hot cups with wax coated insides and dirty paper/ plastic plates/ bowls

## Stuart

- Recycle all empty, plastic to-go containers, empty plastic cups, bottles, glass, cereal boxes, milk cartons and yogurt containers in the recycle bins
- Throw out all trash (food waste, plastic bags, plastic utensils, dirty paper plates, bowls, and wrappers) in the black trash bins
- Organics Recycling bins are located with all waste receptacle bins and should be used to dispose of food scraps, napkins, tea bags, and unlined paper products

All classrooms and office's have recycling/ trash bins.

For a detailed list of items to be recycled, see the Office of Sustainability website section: "Where Can I Recycle My...?"

## Residence Halls Quick Tips

- Large Recycling Totes are Located in every residence hall, either on the first floor of the building, or by the floor trash rooms
- Collect all recyclables in your dorm/apartment/suite and recycle them in the single-stream recycling totes
- All residential hall rooms, suites, and apartments have blue or maroon individual bins for recycling. When full, empty tin larger recycle bins within the residence hall
- Bring your own trash bin for your room

## Green Cleaning Tips – Reduce Indoor Pollution

Traditional household cleaners contain an incredible amount of toxins. That's why Boston College's housekeeping staff are committed to using Green Seal approved cleaning products when cleaning buildings on campus. There are policies in place to ensure that these green products are used everywhere possible.

- Studies show that the air inside our homes is often 70 times more polluted than the air outside, due to the build-up of chemicals for household cleaners. Traditional household cleaners contain an incredible amount of toxins, ranging from chemicals that trigger asthma to those linked to cancer
- Some products are marketed as green products even though they are not. If you are unsure – read the label
- Green cleaners are just as effective as conventional ones and are safe for your health and the environment

### Green Cleaning Quick Tips

- Buy green seal approved products or products which use plant based materials
- Make homemade cleaners using a mixture of baking soda and water, or vinegar and water, to scrub counter tops and showers
- Rinse and recycle all plastic containers

# Emissions Reduction and Energy Conservation

Boston College is committed to conserving energy and reducing emissions. Gross emissions have decreased on campus since 2007 despite overall campus growth.

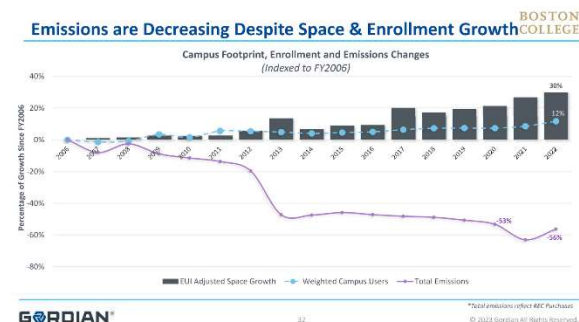
- BC purchased renewable energy credits (RECs) to offset 100% of scope 2 emissions (campus electrical consumption)
- BC emitted over 39,447 MTCDE in the 2021-2022 School Year

The following are examples of measures taken by Boston College and the Engineering and Energy Department to reduce energy (carbon emissions):

- Purchasing green electricity. In 2022, BC's green power was generated from non-impact hydroelectric power
- Committing to design new buildings according to LEED silver standards. LEED – Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, [www.usgbc.org/leed](http://www.usgbc.org/leed).
- Upgrading equipment yearly to optimize efficiency
- Replacing standard lighting to LED across campus
- Implementing enhanced systems controls to monitor and adjust building conditions

## Energy Conservation quick tips

- Turn off the lights/ TV when not in use
- Open the blinds during the day to utilize natural light
- Switch out incandescent and fluorescent light bulbs with LEDs
- Set your thermostat between 68F and 74F in rooms with heat controls (when possible)
- Keep windows closed when your heat is on. If you need to cool your room, turn the heat off or set it to a lower temperature
- Unplug chargers or turn off power strips when not in use
- Power down computers and printers when not in use
- Use EnergyStar appliances when possible. (EnergyStar uses 50% less energy than standard appliances). Look for the blue label on TVs, Speakers, DVD players, light bulbs, and more.
- Report temperature control issues, both in your own residence hall and in other BC building around campus, to the Work Order Center. Submit work orders through Agora Portal under My Services – Facilities Work Requests or through the Autodesk BIM 360 Ops app
- Save energy by using the color setting on washing machines, and only wash full loads





## Water Conservation

- Only 1% of Earth's water is suitable for drinking, so it is imperative that we conserve as much as we can
- **BC consumed over 134 million gallons of water in the 2018 fiscal year. That is 14,336 gallons of water per undergraduate student.**
- BC facilities has been working to reduce our water footprint by installing low flow shower heads, low flow toilets, and improved irrigation control systems
- The Thomas More Apartments at 2150 Commonwealth Avenue have a greywater system that recycles water from showers and sinks and uses it to flush the toilets in the building

50% of bottle water is repackaged tap water. Drink tap water, not bottled water

- Tap water is regulated by strict Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards, whereas bottled water is regulated by less strict FDA standards which do not require testing for E. Coli
- Tap water in Boston is extremely clean and costs only 10 cents for every 5 gallons, contrasted with water bottles which are about \$47 for 5 gallons of the same, or lesser quality water
- Visit the Boston College sustainability page to view monthly Boston water quality reports from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and see how clean our water is

## Water Conservation Quick tips

- Take shorter showers
- Always make full loads for laundry
- Don't use the toilet as a trash can. Toss tissues and waste into trash cans to avoid unnecessary flushes
- Turn off the sink when brushing your teeth or scrubbing dishes. Leaving the water running can waste up to 3 gallons per minute
- Submit a work order for leaks in sinks and showers so that they can be repaired
- Drink tap, not bottled, or purchase a water filter, if necessary. Most traditional style residence halls have a filtered water station in the bathrooms

# Get Your Hands Green

There are many environmental and sustainability-oriented organizations and programs on campus, so it is easy to get involved!

## **EcoPledge**

Ecopledge is the largest student-led organization on campus. They have four committees: Activism, Events, Outreach, and Volunteer. They have events ranging from protests to cleanups to campuswide tabling for Harvest Week and Green Week.

## **Real Food BC**

The goal of Real Food BC is to promote the purchasing of food from local, green, humane sources in order to support localized food production and to reduce carbon emissions that result from long distance food shipments. They run a garden behind Connolly House on Hammond Street to provide locally-grown produce for student events.

## **Climate Justice @ Boston College**

CJBC is a group that aims to educate about the dangers of climate change and how students can be agents for change, unite with local and national climate activists to strengthen social support for climate justice, and engage the BC community about activism – including fossil fuels divestment.

## **UGBC Environmental Division**

E&S is a division within UGBC that advocates for green changes on BC's campus. They run student events, create policy initiatives, and support other student-led environmental groups.

## **Sea Eagles**

Sea Eagles is an organization focused on keeping the ocean environment healthy and

clean. To make a difference, we often host beach cleanups and guest speakers who share their knowledge on ocean conservation.

## **BC Geology Club**

BC Geology Club is a group of students interested in geology and geosciences. They have a mix of scientific/ educational programming as well as bonding activities such as their annual hike.

## **Outdoor Adventures**

Outdoor Adventures is a program run through campus recreation that maintains the climbing wall, rents a variety of outdoor gear, and guides BS students on recreational trips across New England and beyond.

## **Green Your Degree**

Bring your interests in environmental issues into the classroom with a major or minor in Environmental Studies or Environmental Geoscience.

## **Environmental Studies Program**

An interdisciplinary curriculum that offers various perspectives on sustainability from faculty and courses across the university. The Environmental Studies minor is designed to complement any undergraduate major and everyone can partake. Admission to the major is done by the end of freshman year.

There are seven available concentrations: Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change and Societal Adaptation, Environmental Communication, Environmental Entrepreneurship, Environmental Health, Environmental Justice and Policy, and Food and Water Sustainability.

## Earth and Environmental Sciences

The Earth and Environmental Sciences department has two majors: Environmental Geoscience and Geological Sciences. Environmental Geoscience is an interdisciplinary major for students who would like to focus on the science side of sustainability, including those who are looking to careers as scientists. Geological sciences pulls from the traditional Earth and Environmental Sciences programs while preparing students for graduate school in the Geosciences or employment in the industry following graduation.

## Certificate in Sustainability

A six-course online program offered by the Woods College of Advancing Studies. The program focuses on both science and policy and is designed for those seeking to explore subject areas related to climate change, the effects of shifting population and demographics, and the limits of natural resources.

## Green your lifestyle

Here are some other ways to incorporate sustainability to your life at BC:

### Eat At Addies

Located on the second floor of Corcoran Commons, the Loft @ Addie's serves local, sustainably sourced burritos, burrito bowls, churros, and ice cream.

### Composting

Composting is available at almost all dining halls. Additionally, most residence halls are able to compost through Real Food and/or the UGBC Environmental Division programs.

## Green Your Commute

Boston College's busses use at least 5% biofuel and natural gas and travel around the Main Campus, Newton Campus, and Commonwealth Ave.

- For information about the bus schedule, download the free TransLoc app on your phone
- Riding the BC Bus is a convenient and easy way to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution around campus.
- Go Electric! BC offers an EV charging station on the second level of the Commonwealth Avenue garage.

## Green Commuting Quick Tips

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Walk or bike to close destinations
- Use the T instead of individual cars when possible. Student MBTA passes are available at a discount and can be purchased in advance for the entire semester. For more information, visit [www.bc.edu/transportation](http://www.bc.edu/transportation) or stop by student services in Lyons Hall
- Rideshare if you are using a car
- Visit the commuting tab on the BC sustainability webpage for more ideas and information about green commuting

For more information, visit [www.bc.edu/sustainability](http://www.bc.edu/sustainability)



This guide was created in 2016 and revised in 2023 by the Boston College Office of Sustainability to provide students, faculty, and staff with answers to questions about living and working sustainable on BC's campus.

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For more information visit: [www.bc.edu/sustainability](http://www.bc.edu/sustainability)

Follow us on Social Media: Instagram: sustainabilitybc