

Bright Green News

The Campus Sustainability Newsletter

VOLUME 47

January 2014

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The Office Update



Please encourage your friends and colleagues to join our [list serve](#).

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Have an idea for an article? Contact [Kira Stoll](#), BGN editor.

Contact us:
sustainability@berkeley.edu

Check out our website:
<http://sustainability.berkeley.edu>

Every Drop of Water Counts



Even though rain is back in the morning weather report, the drought is still making headlines:

“...the state’s third consecutive year of severely dry conditions, which could be the driest year California has seen in almost 500 years...” [The Daily Cal](#)

“The Sierra snowpack - used to irrigate millions of acres of farmland and to quench the thirst of most of Californians when it melts - is 17 percent of normal.” [SF Chronicle](#)

“The coho salmon of Central California, which swim up the rivers and creeks during the first winter rains, are stranded in the ocean waiting for the surge of water that signals the beginning of their annual migration...” [SF Chronicle](#)

The campus purchases its water from the East Bay Municipal Water District (EBMUD), whose water supply comes from the Mokelumne River watershed in the Sierra Neva-

da Mountains. The water is stored seasonally in the Pardee Reservoir and travels to Berkeley via three 85-mile aqueducts. According to EBMUD, last year was the driest year on record in the Mokelumne River watershed, and “if storms do not replenish reservoirs enough this winter and spring, EBMUD could declare a water shortage emergency.

What is the Campus Doing?

In 2011 – before the current drought – the campus set a goal to reduce potable water use to 10% below 2008 levels by 2020. Through efforts to date, we are already past the halfway mark toward that goal, and campus use is down a total of 17% since 1990, even given the growth in campus facilities in that same timeframe.

About half of the water consumed on campus is domestic (toilets, urinals, showers, and faucets), divided equally between residence halls and all other campus buildings. About one-fifth of usage is in lab buildings (excluding their domestic usage), with irrigation and the steam plant

each using about 10% of the total.

Current campus reduction projects (both completed and currently planned) include reducing the water used by toilets and condensate leak repairs. There have also been reductions due to fixture upgrades in renovations and new buildings, and the creation of new habits affecting water use. **Expect to hear more soon!**

[Saving Water on Campus](#)

- ⇒ Turn off the water while washing your hands, shaving or brushing your teeth
- ⇒ Fix leaky faucets and running toilets – on campus, call 642-1032
- ⇒ Take shorter showers
- ⇒ Use the wastebasket, not the toilet, to dispose of trash

[The Daily Cal also posted tips specifically written for students.](#)

2014 CACS Sustainability Awards and Grants

Award Nominations: Due Friday, March 14th

The Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability (CACS) annually honors faculty, staff, and students that have done outstanding work to help the campus become more sustainable. Nominations can be made for groups or individuals. To learn more about the award, see past winners, and make a nomination, visit the [CACS website](#).



Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability

Green Fund Grants: Due Friday, March 14th

CACS offers annual grants of up to \$2,000 to Berkeley faculty, staff, and students to facilitate green projects. These grants enable members of the UC Berkeley community to undertake projects that will create a greener, more sustainable campus. To download the application for the Green Fund grants and learn about past projects, [click here](#).

WORKbright green: Staff Sustainability Training

Back by popular demand, the Office of Sustainability is excited to again offer **WORKbright green** – UC Berkeley's Free Staff Sustainability Training!

The next session will be held on **Friday February 28th, 10am-5pm**. Campus staff are invited to enroll in this free 7-hour training to provide you with an introduction to campus sustainability and simple and feasible ways to reduce the environmental impacts of the work we do.

The training will be provided by campus experts, and course materials will be at the beginner to intermediate level. Staff will gain campus specific competencies in:

- Reducing waste
- Energy efficiency and conservation
- Using less water
- Greening events
- Sustainability grants and opportunities
- Campus land use/stewardship and greening campus buildings
- Campus transportation options

Sustainability can be enhanced and improved in every job on campus – so no matter what your job – this training can be of benefit.

WORKbright green Basics:

***Free** to UC Berkeley staff members – up to 20 participants will be accepted.

*Time commitment will be the one-day session.

*Training date: Friday, February 28, 2014. 10am-5pm.

To learn more about the training, and how to enroll

[click here.](#)



A staff participant blends a bike-powered smoothie with student group PowerSave.

Inaugural Meeting Berkeley Sustainability Community of Practice

The new Berkeley Sustainability Community (BSC) will offer a forum where students, staff, and faculty who want to learn and do more about sustainability can meet and share ideas. It will be fostered by the Office of Sustainability and modeled after other communities of practice on campus like **BPAWVG**, for "people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly ([Wenger-Trayner](#))."

Are you interested to discuss and collaborate on ideas to strengthen conservation efforts in your office, lab, residence hall, or classroom? This forum could be a place for you to meet others and share. **Everyone on campus is welcome.** *Water conservation will be the topic of our first meeting.*

When: Friday, February 14, 1:00-2:00

(with an additional half hour at the end for networking)

Where: TBD

More Info: sustainability@berkeley.edu

Have you 'Liked' our Facebook Page Yet?

Always be in the loop— **'Like' the UC Berkeley Office of Sustainability on Facebook!** Joining the Office of Sustainability's Facebook community can give you exclusive access

to a wide variety of campus and community news, opportunities, and resources. Take a second to explore our recent posts that range from funding opportunities for green initiatives, to a fun video on how global warming works in less than 60 seconds. 'Like' our Facebook page and stay connected to all that the UC Berkeley Office of Sustainability has to offer!



Article by **Amy Craik**

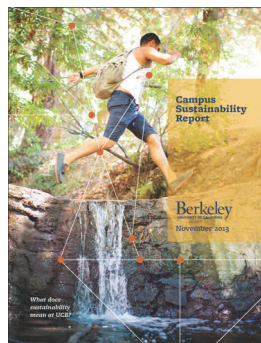
Check out the 2013 Sustainability Report!

Don't miss out on learning about Berkeley's greatest sustainable accomplishments— read the Office of Sustainability's recently released [2013 Campus Sustainability Report](#). The report presents the progress made during 2013 towards achieving our Campus Sustainability Goals. We have seen significant success this year, especially on greenhouse gas reductions, and have met many of our goals and are on track to achieve others.

Highlights from the report include achieving the goal of reducing Berkeley's carbon footprint by one-third – to bring greenhouse gas emissions back to 1990 levels – two years ahead of schedule. Per resident water use in residence halls has declined by over 35% in the last ten years. New

specialized trash bins have been installed around campus to aid Berkeley in achieving zero waste by 2020. Cal Dining has expanded their reusable to-go container program, and campus vendors have increased sustainable food purchases to 28%. Fuel use from campus fleet and commuting is below 1990 levels by over 50%, and the percentage of green vehicles in the fleet has met the goal of having 25% by 2014. In 2012-13, over a quarter of all undergraduates took a course focused on sustainability.

To read more about these accomplishments, and to see other ways Berkeley is reducing its impact on the environment, check out the [full report](#).



Article by **Lindsey Agnew**

Net Impact - Small Steps, Big Wins

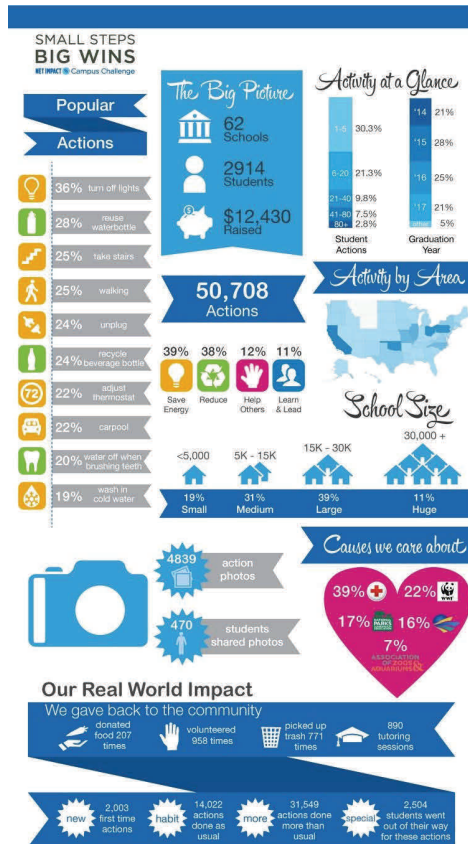
Last semester, Cal won second place in the national competition called The Small Steps, Big Wins Campus Challenge. The Small Steps, Big Wins Campus Challenge is an initiative of myActions and Net Impact, a community of more than 30,000 changemakers who are using their business skills to work for good. The competition allows undergrads to help make their campus more sustainable, while tackling our world's social and environmental challenges one step at a time.

To participate, students can simply [sign up for a free account](#). On the platform or free mobile app, students can enter in actions that have made a positive environmental or social impact (ex: turning off lights before exiting a room, recycling plastic bottles, holding a fundraiser, etc.). Each action earns points and are combined as points earned by the school. The top 2 schools can win \$1500 or \$1000 for a sustaina-

ble party. Top point earning individuals can also win prizes such as a \$500 value plane ticket to anywhere in the US, \$100 gift cards, and water bottles. In addition, points are also matched by sponsors and donated to the participant's nonprofit of choice. Last semester Cal had 114 participants, who combined entered in 4,552 actions, and fundraised \$1,052.50. The infographic illustrates how all the participating campuses combined, have made a difference. Tiffany Tran, Cal's Campus Director will be leading the competition once again in the Spring and has big plans to expand the competition and to get Cal as a winning top tier school.

If you would like to participate in the competition, the [Spring competition](#) will be February 10 through April 25. For any questions or inquires please email [Tiffany Tran](#).

Article by **Tiffany Tran**



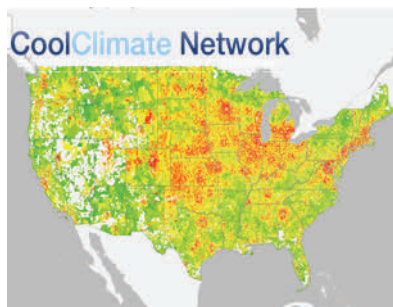
smallsteps.netimpact.org

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New Study finds Carbon Footprint “Hurricanes” in Suburban Areas

UC Berkeley researchers released a new study mapping out the distribution of carbon emissions throughout the United States. Utilizing dozens of variables, researchers discovered that suburbs contribute over 50 percent of national greenhouse gas emissions, even though less than 50 percent of the population lives in these areas. Cities, on the other hand, contribute less greenhouse gas emissions per person than any other part of the country. These low emissions, however, are negated by urban sprawl into suburbs, which encourages increased emissions through cars, trucks, and other vehicles that release carbon dioxide.



The study includes an interactive map showing exactly how many metric tons of carbon dioxide are emitted from a given location. Christopher Jones, one of the participating researchers from the Energy and Resources Group, described the map as illustrating “carbon footprint hurricanes”

that center around low emissions in urban centers, and high emissions in surrounding suburbs.

Researchers also looked into the direct correlation between income, car ownership, home size, and carbon emissions. Higher incomes in the suburbs indicated higher carbon emissions.

With these results, researchers hope to influence energy and resource management plans and initiatives in cities and suburbs to better fit their different needs. Suburbs are often prime locations for solar panels, electric vehicles, and energy saving technologies that can help combat their disproportionately high greenhouse gas emissions.

Explore the interactive carbon emissions map and learn more about the study [here](#).

Article by **Ben Rushakoff**



Bloggers Wanted!

Looking to get more involved with the **student campus sustainability and environmental community** this semester? Join the exciting, brand-new SERC (Student Environmental Resource Center) Blog staff for a chance to write stories on campus and global sustainability news and events, produce videos spotlighting campus sustainability leaders, and participate in weekly Environmental Storytelling workshops to help improve your writing and environmental communication skills.

If interested in joining the SERC blogging team, email [Hanna Morris](#) and [Manon von Kaenel](#).

Get updated information from SERC by [joining their staff Facebook group](#).

Spring TGIF Grants: Apply Now!

There is still time left to apply for the [TGIF spring grant program](#). Spring grants are geared to larger and longer-timeline campus sustainability projects, with requests of over \$2,000. **Applicants must first submit an abstract form** by one of two possible deadlines. The TGIF committee reviews abstracts and then invites qualified projects to submit a full application. The TGIF coordinator offers workshops and individualized feedback for those interested in applying for a grant.

Stage 1: Open to all Berkeley students, staff, and faculty

Early Abstract Submission:

Friday, January 31, 2014 by 5pm

Final Abstract Submission:

Friday, February 21, 2014 by 5pm

Stage 2: By Invitation Only, selected from the abstract submissions

Final Application Submission:

Friday, April 4, 2014 by 5pm

Students Prepare for Solar Spring Break

A group of 11 Berkeley students will be spending their spring break installing solar panels on homes in low income neighborhoods in Oakland. The students, including a recent graduate, are part of the **Student Environmental Resource Center** outreach committee.

The students are working with [Grid Alternatives](#), a program that provides them with installation training and helps them find qualified families— but participants have to fundraise the cost of the panels themselves.

The student volunteers will spend the first day of spring break receiving training on how to install the panels, and then two days on each installation. The team hopes to install panels on two homes by the end of break.

This will be the first Grid Alternative installation in the Bay Area. Low income families apply to Grid Alternatives, and a representative inspects their home to see if it is suitable for solar panel installation.



“It’s hard to get out of the Berkeley bubble, and this is an easy way to tap into the community and bond with people around us. We are so blessed to be here and have all the resources that we have, the least we can do is take time we already have to help out people who need it,” said Cal Solar Spring Break participant Kristen Chen.

Interested in volunteering with Grid Alternatives? It is too late to sign up for the Solar Spring Break this year, but the team is looking for someone to help make a short video to fundraise for their project.

In the long term, SERC hopes to have a team from Berkeley participate every year. Grid Alternatives offers many other opportunities to join projects throughout California.

The students have recently begun fundraising efforts, raising **\$500 out of the \$5,000** necessary to pay for the panels. You can support Cal Solar Spring Break by [making a tax-deductible donation to their project](#).

Article by **Lindsey Agnew**

Taking Sustainable Office Supplies on the Campus Road

In June 2013, Emily McKeon and Lin King of Campus Recycling and Refuse Services’ Zero Waste Research Center partnered with Sandy Macasieb of UC Berkeley Procurement and Scott Hrudicka of OfficeMax to create a simplified list of environmentally preferred office products offered in UC Berkeley’s Bear Buy purchasing system. The Zero Waste Research Center suggested products that they had researched and deemed as the best sustainable alternatives to common office supplies. Procurement provided insight on the campus purchasing contracts and on the OfficeMax product availability on Bear Buy. OfficeMax contacted vendors such as Pilot, Sanford, and 3M to establish a relationship between them and the project and create the Environmentally Preferred Products Road Show (EPP Road Show).

This list of products includes sustainable alternatives to common office supplies such as pens, whiteboard markers, and post-its. For example, the Pilot B2P pen was chosen because it is made

out of recycled PET #1 water bottles, can be recycled if it breaks, and the ink is refillable. A pen is the most common office supply as well as one of the most wasteful since you only use the ink and then subsequently throw away the plastic shell. It is important to identify items such as this that are abundant and wasteful and to replace with them with sustainable alternatives is working to reach UC Berkeley’s Zero Waste by 2020 Goal. The purchasing information for all of these selected products was compiled into an [EPP Purchasing Guide](#).

The purpose of the EPP Road Shows is to educate staff, faculty, and students on the available sustainable alternatives of office supplies. This is done by handing out samples of the

products as well as elaborating on their environmentally preferred characteristics.



Check out Berkeley’s New Sustainable Office Supply Purchasing Guide!

Campus Shared Services (CSS) hosted the first EPP Road Show in November with the help of the Facilities Manager, Doris Frisch, the Staff Development and Engagement Lead, Andrea Lambert, and the Learning

Coordinator, Michael Thompson.

The program is expected to continue in 2014 with a Road Show beginning in February at California Hall.

Please visit [Campus Recycling and Refuse Service’s website](#) for more information. If your campus building or department is interested in hosting an EPP Road Show, please contact [Emily McKeon](#).

Article by **Emily McKeon**