



University Policy: Zero Waste

Policy Category: Sustainability

Subject: Waste

Office Responsible for Review of this Policy: Sustainability

Related University Policies: American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment; Green Building Policy; Green Cleaning Policy; Sustainable Purchasing Policy; Talloires Declaration

I. SCOPE

This policy applies to all University departments.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Consistent with American University's strategic goal to "Act on our values through Social Responsibility and Service," and to facilitate implementation of our existing sustainability policies (as referenced above), the purpose of this policy is to protect and restore our environment by managing material flows through the university and manage waste/recycling processes that: improve energy, water, and material efficiency; utilize renewable materials; enable the University to attain carbon-neutrality or net positive renewable energy production; eliminate waste, especially hazardous materials; enhance the physical campus environment; and protect and enhance the health of the University community.

III. DEFINITIONS

Construction and Demolition Debris: For the purposes of this policy, the term *Construction and Demolition Debris* includes, at a minimum: building components and structures (wall studs, insulation, doors, windows), panels, attached finishes (drywall, trim, ceiling panels), carpet and other flooring material, adhesives, sealants, paints and coatings. Furniture, fixtures and equipment; and mechanical, electrical and plumbing components, and specialty items such as elevators, are not included in this definition.

Durable Goods: For the purposes of this policy, the term *Durable Goods* includes, at a minimum: office equipment (computers, monitors, copiers, printers, fax machines); appliances (refrigerators, dishwashers, water coolers); external power adapters; televisions and other audiovisual equipment.

Source Reduction: reduces the amount of unnecessary material brought to campus, for example excess product packaging such as disposable, single-use water bottles.

US Green Building Council (USGBC) LEED Standard: is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to promoting cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings through the

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building certification program. LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national rating system for buildings designed, constructed and operated for improved environmental and human health performance, addressing all building types, and emphasizing state-of-the-art strategies in: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality.

Waste: comprises all materials that flow from campus to final disposal, for example paper, yard waste, food scraps, and plastics. In LEED, waste refers to all materials that are capable of being diverted from campus buildings' waste stream through waste reduction.

Waste Diversion: is a management activity that disposes of waste other than through incineration or the use of landfills, for example reuse and recycling.

Waste Reduction: includes source reduction and waste diversion through reuse and recycling.

IV. POLICY

The University will conduct and contract waste management to be consistent, at a minimum, with the requirements of the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), Leadership in Environmental Engineering and Design standards, as summarized below; and shall strive for zero waste sent to landfill and incineration.

By June 30, 2010, the Office of Sustainability, in collaboration with Facilities and Administrative Services, Procurement and Contracts, and other University units as may be deemed necessary, shall develop a plan for achieving zero waste by a target date established by the team, including interim benchmarks for: reducing waste at the source, increasing recycling rates, diverting waste toward reuse and composting, and other waste reduction and diversion strategies as they become identified.

The zero waste plan shall require an annual waste stream audit; designate staff responsible for implementing the plan; outline proposed actions for reducing waste; describe tracking and review procedures for monitoring the plan; and include deadlines for achieving, at minimum, the following goals:

- Reuse, recycle or compost 50% of ongoing consumables (by weight or volume)
- Reuse, recycle or compost 100% of ongoing consumables (by weight or volume)
- Reuse or recycle 75% of durable goods waste stream (by weight, volume or replacement value)
- Reuse or recycle 100% of durable goods waste stream (by weight, volume or replacement value)
- Divert 70% of construction and demolition debris (by volume) from landfill or incineration
- Divert 100% of construction and demolition debris (by volume) from landfill or incineration
- Recycle all mercury-containing lamps
- Divert 80% of discarded batteries from trash, including single-use and/or rechargeable batteries used in radios, phones, cameras, computers and other dry-cell types of batteries.
- Divert 100% of discarded batteries from trash, including single-use and/or rechargeable batteries used in radios, phones, cameras, computers and other dry-cell types of batteries.

V. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW AND UPDATE

Any party affected by this Policy may initiate review and update at any time. The Office of Sustainability will initiative review and update not more than three years from the effective date, or date of last review or update, whichever is most recent.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPROVAL

Last reviewed: December 1, 2009.

This policy is approved and effective when signed by the officers listed below:

Amel M. Kuum

President

[Signature]

Vice President

1/14/10

Date approved