

Climate Action Plan

*Rollins School of Public Health
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Introduction

The Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH) has a long history supporting sustainability and actions that relate to climate change. Many of the goals of sustainability coincide with behaviors and actions to improve the health of the public. We have active students, staff, and faculty who are committed to improving the global environment. Through coursework for degree credit, student organizations focused on the environment, special events, and continued efforts to operate the School with sustainability goals in mind, the RSPH demonstrates that commitment to sustainability can be an integral part of our overall strategic plan.

Key players consist of all leadership positions, including student leadership, throughout the School. Each is involved in the consensus to implement new or ongoing climate change action within our areas of responsibility.

Sustainable Building and Construction

The RSPH had the opportunity to build a second building, the Claudia Nance Rollins Building (CNR), using all of the current green or LEED guidelines. The goal for the new building was Silver LEED Certification which was achieved through the combined efforts of the RSPH, Emory Campus Services, the architectural firm of SLAM, and the contractor Whiting-Tuner. This was a unique opportunity to achieve major sustainability goals for the School that are rarely available to existing units at Emory.

Some of the more obvious features of CNR include:

- Elevators located further from the main entrance than stairs
- Energy efficient glazed exterior glass
- LED lighting whenever possible
- Use of sustainable material throughout the building
- Dual flush toilets
- Low flow faucets and urinals in the bathrooms
- Motion sensitive lighting in all offices and hallways

At the time we began renovating the Grace Crum Rollins Building (GCR) as part of the RSPH expansion project, it was selected to participate in the URECA initiative that retro-fitted existing buildings on campus to increase energy efficiency. That fortunate circumstance, paired with our initial plan to renovate the three lower floors of GCR, enabled a significant number of new features:

- A café using all compostable serving pieces
- Motion sensitive lighting in all offices
- Dual flush toilets

- Low flow faucets in the bathroom
- New more energy efficient HVAC units
- Replacement of lighting with more energy efficient bulbs
- Elimination of bottled water coolers that were replaced with hot and cold filtered water on each floor
- Renewed focus on recycling and composting

Ongoing renovation and furniture purchases continue to adhere to the School’s sustainability goals.

Goals:

1. Continue to operate facilities by setting and incorporating specific climate-related goals. We are currently participating in a new phase of optimizing energy usage for recently re-commissioned buildings that were part of the URECA project.
2. Take advantage of metering technologies (e.g., electricity; elevator control systems; water; etc.) built into CNR and GCR to develop campaigns that provide feedback to users as to their current footprint, and develop, and track progress towards, goals of a future reduced footprint.
3. Disseminate RSPH research related to the built environment and sustainable building technologies.

Energy

Over half of the university-wide carbon footprint is the result of electrical energy usage in classrooms, laboratories, office spaces, and other facilities. Substantial reductions in the RSPH carbon footprint can be achieved both by reducing electricity consumption and by utilizing renewable sources of energy for electrical production. RSPH has the potential to lead among national schools of public health, positioning itself, for instance, as the MPH/MSPH degree with the smallest carbon footprint.

Goals:

1. Explore options to access renewable energy sources. While an Emory-wide approach to this would be desirable, there are currently individual units that are taking action (e.g., SOM), and the RSPH is supportive and will identify and pursue opportunities to examine school-specific options, and participate in an Emory-wide initiative.
2. Reduce consumption of electricity by initiating a School campaign to “turn off” lights, monitors and other equipment when not in use. Additional education efforts include:
 - a. Encourage participation in Emory’s Green Office Program.
 - b. Educate faculty and staff on Emory’s personal space heater ban.
 - c. Encourage building occupants to dress appropriately for the season.
3. Reduce energy consumption in laboratories. The RSPH is part of Emory’s Green Lab Program with one of our faculty serving on the committee. Because the CNR building is less than five years old the laboratory equipment, such as fume hoods, is still currently the most energy efficient available.
4. Whenever possible, replace equipment with more energy efficient units. This has been successful in our Information Technology area where we are continuing to migrate to more efficient server

hardware as refreshes are done to reduce electric demand and lower cooling requirements. Migration of high performance computing and server services to cloud resources are removing the local resource demand entirely.

5. Conduct a nighttime audit to ensure that the automated temperature reductions are functioning properly.
6. Quantify the cost of daily building occupant activities where possible (e.g., energy used for a single elevator use; energy used per hour of operating CNR auditorium; etc.) and communicate to staff/faculty/students.
7. Continue to support RSPH Wellness Champions to encourage faculty and staff with incentives that will improve health and wellness and contribute to sustainability goals. For example, a challenge was held to increase use of stairs over elevators.

Transportation and Alternative Commutes

RSPH faculty, staff, and students are increasingly interested in healthier, shorter commutes. Educational efforts in this area could therefore yield significant returns. RSPH has a growing biking community that is supported through the availability of showers and lockers in the GCR building and the new FixIt Station installed near the RSPH bike racks. For individuals where biking is not realistic, carpooling and/or telecommuting are often options to reduce vehicle use. The RSPH already operates a hybrid car for local business delivery and travel.

Goals:

1. Encourage the Rollins Community to take advantage of the Transportation and Parking Services website for information and suggestions. Given limited and diminishing Michael Street lot capacity, identify and consider best-practices implemented in other units to actively increase participation at RSPH in alternative commute/transportation programs.
2. Continue to include information on alternative commute options in new student orientation.
3. Add school-specific information on alternative commute options to the orientation of new faculty.
4. Promote Zimride and other Emory initiatives to reduce the number of vehicles traveling to campus each day.
5. Encourage the use of efficient vehicles or alternative transit options when traveling offsite in the Atlanta area for RSPH business.

Technology

Goals:

1. Continue to support videoconference and teleconference options, ensuring RSPH offers the latest capabilities with the greatest ease of use.
2. Educate staff and faculty on videoconference and teleconference capabilities, providing instructional materials in multiple formats (e.g., on the RSPH website; in conference rooms; etc.).
3. Continue to support School leased print/copy/scanners that eliminate the need for multiple printers and fax machines.

Waste Minimization

Rollins has been a campus-wide leader in waste minimization. Claudia Nance Rollins is one of two Zero Waste academic buildings with comprehensive recycling and composting programs. In July 2013, RSPH recycled 2,784 pounds of plastic, aluminum, white and mixed paper.

Food-related waste

1. Implement a school-wide “no Styrofoam” policy.
 - a. Remove all Styrofoam from break /coffee rooms and replace with compostable or re-usable mugs/cups.
 - b. Educate departments and student groups on strategies to use/negotiate for non-Styrofoam products when placing food orders/hosting events.
2. Reduce bottled water use at school-sponsored events and replace with water/tea stations and compostable cups.
3. Educate departments and student groups on alternatives to bottled water at events.
4. Encourage use of reusable silverware, cups, and plates at School sponsored events. These items are already stocked RSPH Fulfillment Services.

Paper-related waste

1. Set default on printers to double sided.
2. Continue to inform department chairs of printer and photocopy use and associated costs; develop ways to ensure this information is reaching faculty and staff.
3. Reduce the number of printers; increase use of communal printers.
4. Continue to keep color printers out of the RSPH. All floors now have a color copier/printer/scanner that replaces many individual printers.
5. Continue to use non-paper materials whenever possible. For example, orientation materials are almost entirely online. The materials distributed to more than 250 students at the bi-annual Career Fair are now on an app.
6. Encourage use of Blackboard for professors.
 - a. Post lectures and slides online (rather than printing).
 - b. Students submit assignments online.
 - c. Offer technical assistance for those not familiar/comfortable with Bb.
7. RSPH HR will continue to work closely with the IT Department and Emory HR to implement a paperless student hire process.
8. RSPH HR will continue to work closely with IT on retaining only electronic versions of all HR documents.

Waste disposal

1. Improve education on composting, recycling and landfill trash.
2. Audit current waste disposal systems to ensure that recycling, compost, and trash are truly going to their intended final destinations.
3. Identify potential areas of high waste and be sure that the full suite of disposal options (recycling, compost, trash) are available (example: GCR basement student kitchen currently only has a trash

can which is perpetually full of napkins, food containers, paper bags, food waste, and plastic bottles).

4. Continue to educate the Rollins Community on reuse, donation, or proper disposal of outdated equipment (office supplies, electronics, computers, furniture, batteries, etc.).

Food

1. Encourage Sustainable Event Certification for all Rollins Community events.
2. Educate meeting attendees on proper disposal bins for all meeting-related materials (e.g., Emory Catering forks go in composting).
3. Educate departments and student groups on sustainable catering options available through America to go and Emory Catering.
4. Encourage event organizer to ask caterersto bring compostable serving pieces and purchase sustainable pieces through Fulfillment Services.
5. Implement a zero-food waste policy for all school-wide events.
 - a. Educate departments and student groups on strategies to reduce food waste at department and student events.
 - b. Track food waste at events to monitor change over time and to inform additional waste reduction strategies. These efforts not only can reduce waste, but also can reduce expenses of events.
6. Continue to support Emory Dining’s Meatless Monday campaign at Rollins Café; implement an educational campaign to promote Meatless Monday school wide and engage students to conduct research to evaluate effectiveness of Meatless Monday to reduce meat consumption/procurement at Rollins Café and the overall carbon footprint.

Procurement

The RSPH offices of Reimbursements and Payables (RAP), the Office of Fulfillment Services, and IT work closely together to ensure that products and services are obtained in a proper and timely manner. Because the offices work so closely, we are able to coordinate and offer an in-house inventory of standard supplies and small office equipment that avoids the purchase of non-essential items or “boutique” items that often go unused. This consolidation of procurement has not only resulted in less waste and unused supplies, but also has reduced the number of truck deliveries to the School.

Some of the practices and accomplishments have been:

- RAP reviews all Emory Express orders and determines if the item(s) requested need to be reviewed and/or processed through Office Services or IT. This reduces multiple requests to the same vendors, ensures proper purchasing and support of Emory computers and mobile devices, and ensures that RSPH Departments are receiving the best/competitive pricing.
- All deliveries to RSPH are made to Fulfillment Services. This reduces the traffic flow of non-Emory personnel to one central location and allows for proper delivery of packages to the correct RSPH location, as the packages are actually delivered by Fulfillment Services staff and tracked electronically—much like a Federal Express package is tracked.

- RSPH instated an in-house purchasing requisition system which allows RSPH departments to order standard office/business supplies from Fulfillment Services. This practice not only circumvents the possibility of multiple deliveries due to multiple orders, but it also allows the end user to obtain the needed supplies in a more rapid manner, as many of the supplies are in stock within Fulfillment Services. This is a paperless system.
- In FY2013, Fulfillment Services began stocking recycled paper products, which are now the standard paper products for school events.
- RSPH replaced all its copiers with one standard color/black and white copier model. This was accomplished by paying lease costs at the School level with departments paying for paper and toner. This standard copier allowed RSPH to remove the multiple color and black and white printers that are housed throughout the school. This change also removed the need to purchase and overstock multiple types of printer cartridges, which was the practice in the past.

Goals:

1. In FY2015, RSPH plans to continue to review its supply and equipment usage to assess whether additional standardization is needed/helpful.
2. RAP will continue its review of RSPH procurement practices and trends to determine if future standardization and improvements can be made.
3. RAP is currently working on guidelines for foreign payments/purchases/travel in hopes that this information will be used to help streamline efforts and costs.

Curriculum

RSPH has robust sustainability coursework offerings as part of our diverse graduate programs. This includes ***EH582***: Global Climate Change and Health: Impacts and Response; ***EH586***: Advanced seminar on Climate Change and Health; ***EH590R***: Environmental Health Seminar: Sustainability; Community-Engaged Learning in Food Systems and Public Health and others. Learning objectives in these courses include linking carbon pollution reduction to important public health goals, such as improved nutrition, reduced air pollution and increased physical activity. As part of our CAP, RSPH will highlight our strengths in teaching sustainability to the Emory community and to RSPH prospective students, while also working to expand our offerings through the following activities:

Goals:

1. Encourage faculty collaboration with the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and other units to integrate climate-related topics (e.g., the public health effects of fossil fuel energy sources, transportation emissions, the energy-water nexus) into the health science curricula across Emory..
2. Highlight courses that integrate sustainability into learning objectives and faculty research that has a sustainability component (could be integrated into the sustainability webpage listed below).
3. Begin discussions concerning a school-wide sustainability concentration administered in collaboration or with inputs/support from the Office of Sustainability.
4. In current coursework, highlight the importance of integrating sustainability into existing public health initiatives.

Research

RSPH has robust research in climate-related health impacts, co-benefits of climate mitigation and many other areas. Schools of public health must continue to do even more in the research arena to provide actionable solutions for mitigating and adapting to climate change. RSPH health scientists play crucial roles in investigating the nature and dynamics of climate change health impacts, in estimating their consequences for population health and global development, and in devising new approaches and interventions that will reduce the health burden of future changes to the global climate system. As part of our CAP, RSPH will highlight our strengths in research to the Emory community and to prospective and current RSPH students, while also working to expand our research activities in this space:

1. Articulate RSPH's strengths and opportunities with respect to climate and health research, and pursue additional external funding in these areas.
2. Strengthen the community of climate-health researchers in RSPH, at Emory, and within Georgia and the southeast, facilitating seminar series, colloquia and symposia.
3. Increase the number of graduate student opportunities in climate change and health research across RSPH departments.
4. Support ways in which the new campus-wide Climate@Emory initiative (led by a number of RSPH faculty) can facilitate collaboration among the climate-health research community, and support Climate@Emory's efforts to secure new research funding.

Outreach and communication

1. Develop a sustainability webpage within the RSPH website (i.e., RSPH commitment to sustainability) to raise awareness on sustainability and public health linkages and to educate faculty, staff, current and prospective students on what RSPH is doing as a unit to support reductions in its carbon footprint and foster development of graduates in public health and sustainability-related issues