University of Minnesota Morris

Our Green Story

At Morris it’s easy to make the green choice—sustainability is so deeply ingrained in our everyday lives that we don’t always think about the scope of its reach. For more than 100 years, our campus has been grounded in a mission of environmental sustainability, and this mission touches all aspects of University life. Both our pivotal successes and everyday victories range from the ground up and make this place truly extraordinary!

Eating Green

Skip the tray! We save energy and water by not using trays in the Dining Hall. This also discourages us from picking up more food than we can eat.

Eat Local Every Day!

Dining Services brings local, sustainably sourced fruits, vegetables, and meats to campus dining facilities. The Dining Hall used 2,400 pounds of produce harvested from Crocus Valley, the student organic garden, in 2015.

Green to Go!

Forks made from potatoes, cups made from corn, to-go items are entirely compostable.

Compost!

Containers at the Dining Hall and Turtle Mountain Cafe allow diners to compost organic waste like banana peels, apple cores, and even paper!

Green Glossary

Biomass: Renewable organic matter such as crops and crop residues, perennial grasses, wood, algae, animal manure, and the organic parts of municipal and industrial waste.

Fashion Trashion: Annual fashion show staged by studio art students in which each student crafts and models an ensemble made entirely of reused materials.

Gasification: A thermal process that burns organic materials in a low-oxygen environment, producing low-BTU producer gas, or syngas. Syngas can be substituted for natural gas in a furnace, turbine, or engine.

Morris Green Reinvestment Fund: A student-initiated funding project that helps Morris make sustainable technological and infrastructure investments.

Solar Thermal Collector: Solar energy device that heats water.

UMM Sustainable “Green” Fund: An annual fund that enables Morris to support renewable energy projects on campus.

Living Green

800 Number of Indoor Plants on Campus

80,000 Trees now living in three hives on campus, in partnership with Morris Area High School and West Central Research and Outreach Center

The Morris campus expects to reduce carbon emissions by 10,000 metric tons per year using wind and biomass—an 80% reduction.

-breathing green-

A biomass gasifier plant at the Morris campus uses local natural resources—from corn cobs to mixed prairie grasses—to heat and cool the campus. The system is expected to displace 70% of the fossil fuel previously used for heating and cooling and will save approximately $300,000 into the local economy yearly.

A 32-unit solar thermal array heats the Regional Fitness Center pool, reducing our CO2 emissions by 30,000 pounds each year.

A 3kW solar photovoltaic system on the south side of the science building allows students to analyze fixed panels versus panels that follow the sun.

A 25kW solar photovoltaic system is directly connected to our Green Prairie Community residence hall.

Two onsite 1.65 MW wind turbines produce 10 million MWhs of electrical power annually, contributing 6% of the electrical needs for the Morris campus. In total, 70% of our electricity comes from renewable sources through our on-site and grid purchases.

BREATHING GREEN

800

NUMBER OF INDOOR PLANTS ON CAMPUS

80,000

Trees now living in three hives on campus, in partnership with Morris Area High School and West Central Research and Outreach Center

By using wind-generated electricity instead of thermal-generated electricity, the campus avoids using at least 300 gallons of water per MWh, which annually totals 1.5 million gallons of water, from aquifers, rivers, and lakes.

In 2015 the campus recycled nearly 200,000 pounds of aluminum, tin, plastic, glass, and electronics—waste as well as cardboard, glossy paper, office paper, and news print.

To clear our sidewalks during the winter Facilities Management uses granite chips, potassium acetate, and urea, which are less aggressive and corrosive than sidewalk salt. These materials do not leach into soils, so they also stay out of our groundwater.

LIVING GREEN

GREEN GLOSSARY

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Campus governance approves Morris Green Reinvestment Fund.

Second wind turbine begins generating power.

Composting begins in Dining Services.

Welcome Centre renovated to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Katie Laughlin ’10 graduates as Morris’s first environmental studies major.

First annual Fashion Trashion show.

Morris becomes a MN GreenCorps partner site.

The UMM Sustainable “Green” Fund is established.

Morris hires first sustainability coordinator in the University of Minnesota system.

Morris becomes a founding member of the Higher Education Steering Committee (HESC) of the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE).

State of Minnesota allocates funds to construct biomass gasifier.

University receives a grant to build first wind turbine.

Campus subscribes to Otter Tail Power Company’s wind power program.

Morris becomes a founding member of the Pride of the Prairie Local Foods Initiative.

In the last four years Morris has diverted more than 123 tons of food waste. It will continue to divert more than 40 tons of waste each year.