Columbus State University: Creating a Sustainable “U”

CSU encourages faculty, staff and students to promote and use sustainable practices at the university and at home. The Office of Sustainability leads this effort by increasing recycling, installing energy-efficient lighting, using electric vehicles, and encouraging alternative transportation.

Our goal: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE “U” at Columbus State University.

CSU Recycling Program
- Recycling results to date:
  - 5,057 pounds of batteries since 2014.
  - 26 tons of paper, plastic, and aluminum since 2015.
  - 21 tons of cardboard since April 2014.
  - 7,997 pounds of toner/inkjet cartridges since 2012.
  - 3,933 pounds of scrap metal since 2016.

Transportation and Car Sharing
- CSU works to reduce demand for on-campus parking, alleviate congestion, reduce carbon footprint, and provide sustainable alternative transportation.
- CSU transports 130,000 students, faculty, and staff annually between main and RiverPark campuses.
- Every shuttle bus has a bike rack.
- Card scanners are used for security and student safety.
- Car sharing is provided through Zipcar.
- Fuel efficiency is considered when purchasing all new vehicles.

Environmental Impact
- CSU efforts to decrease utilities costs:
  - Occupancy sensors throughout campus.
  - Motion sensors on sinks and toilets.
  - Waterless urinals.
  - Replace T12 bulbs with efficient T8 bulbs.
  - Upgrade campus lighting to LEDs.
  - Install more efficient HVAC and other systems.
  - Automated, remotely controlled HVAC systems.
  - Automatic water bottle filling stations.

Bicycle and Walking Infrastructure
- Fall Line Trace offers safe and easy access between the main and Riverpark campuses.
- All pathways are handicap accessible.
- Bike racks and storage rooms are strategically placed throughout CSU.
- Local bike shops offer affordable bike rentals to students on both campuses.
- CSU Police patrol using bicycles on both campuses.

Public Outreach
- Oxbow Meadows is a CSU outreach center providing exhibits, natural history displays, nature trails, and educational programs about the ecology and natural history of the region.
- The center houses a variety of snakes, turtles, tortoises, fish, alligators, invertebrates, and more. Trails allow chance to see native wildlife, wetlands and ponds.
- Partnership with Columbus Water Works.
- CSU also hosts ONE CSU, an annual Sustainability event that promotes environmentally friendly programs. This event brings in local businesses to provide education on sustainable practices and promote their services and products.

Solar Panels
- Two solar panel arrays power pathway lighting around campus.
- More solar arrays around campus are being planned to offset energy and educate the local community and student body about renewable energy and its benefits.

Electric Vehicles and Charging
- In a continuing effort for the campus to become more reliant on electric vehicles and other eco-friendly resources:
  - CSU has added numerous electric vehicles for daily use around campus to offset its carbon footprint.
  - The Facilities division alone currently has 23 environmentally friendly electric carts.
  - CSU has 5 electric car charging stations on its campuses.
  - CSU Police use electric vehicles to patrol campus.

Landscaping Design and Management
- CSU is home to more than 45 tree species.
- Time sensitive sprinklers ensure trees have an adequate amount of water.
- CSU has a very dense and healthy tree canopy which greatly reduces the surface runoff and soil erosion.
- CSU has a composting program, taking excess food from our dining services provider and composting it at Oxbow Meadows.
- CSU has developed a Master Landscaping Plan to ensure best use of campus grounds sustainably and cost-effectively.

https://sustainability.columbusstate.edu/