



The Paybacks

Greening initiatives are challenging, but they can yield significant paybacks.

- **Environmental and economic sustainability.** A system-wide culture of sustainability helps preserve and enhance what you value as an institution today and for the future.
- **Leadership through example.** Many colleges and universities fall far short of making their mark as environmental leaders because they fail to practice on the campus what they preach in the classroom. Although colleges and universities offer courses in environmental management, engineering, laws and regulations, and assessment, many have failed to comply with environmental requirements or to take part in pollution prevention activities.
- **Economic benefits.** Environmental audits that reveal waste and inefficiency associated with campus activities, coupled with the identification of environmentally friendly alternatives, can yield significant cost savings for your institution. You can discover steps—often simple steps—that your institution can take to correct and improve environmental problems on campus.

➤ **“Real-life” work experience for your students.** Environmental audits and pollution prevention evaluations can be integrated into the curriculum, providing students with hands-on investigative and problem-solving experiences that they can take with them when they enter the workforce. This experience not only makes your students more marketable, it also provides them with the kinds of broad-thinking skills that allow them to succeed and thrive once they are employed.

➤ **A better prepared and valuable graduate pool.** As more and more businesses adopt environmentally conscious practices they are looking to campuses that have adopted a green philosophy for graduates who can carry this operational philosophy into the work place.

➤ **Improved quality of life on your campus.** Environmental awareness is a way of life that can be integrated into all college programs and course work. A Green Campus is a cleaner, safer, healthier place to live and work.

Room for Improvement

Almost any administrative and operational function on campus influences the use of resources and the generation of waste to some degree. There is room for environmental improvement in just about any activity the investigative eye dares to aim its sights—regulatory compliance, procurement, transportation, fleet management, physical plant operation, grounds maintenance, food services, waste management, social programs, laboratory practices, materials management, and communication services.

What Makes a Successful Green Campus?

The impetus for a successful Green Campus program must begin at the top and emanate throughout the rest of the campus. Once the decision to become a Green Campus is made, then the real work begins. While no two campuses are alike, and approaches to launching and maintaining a Green Campus will differ from place to place, there are some basic ingredients that will help ensure success:

- Establish a Green Campus Environmental Ethic Awareness campaign.
- Set forth a Green Campus Mission and a Statement of Principles.
- Establish a Green Campus organizational structure and a team that is representative of the student body and every campus department.
- Develop a strategic plan that includes policy and curriculum reforms that reflect your stated “green campus” mission.
- Create student teams to work closely with faculty and administrative staff to carry out specific tasks of the strategic plan.
- Establish public/private partnerships with personnel from federal, state, and local environmental agencies, utilities, and the business community.
- Evaluate daily operations in terms of pollution prevention, waste stream management, and energy efficiency—reducing, reusing, recycling, repairing wherever possible.
- Implement business practices that they are environmentally responsible, efficient, and in harmony with your Green Campus goals.
- Adopt and implement an environmental management system that is similar to those

being adopted by progressive businesses and industries.

- Determine and document short-term and long-term economic benefits, including the benefits of environmental compliance and improved health and safety.
- Secure a commitment up front from the people in charge that well-founded recommendations will be acted upon once audits are completed.
- Make the commitment to a long-term program of system-wide environmental reeducation and retooling.



▲ Students at Gateway Community College conduct an audit of a classroom laboratory.

▼ Students at Southern Maine Technical College collect samples from a campus stormwater discharge area.





What Is a Green Campus?

In addition to being learning centers, college and university campuses are self-contained communities supported by vast systems of institutional and operational functions.

➤ A Green Campus is one that carries out these functions according to a system-wide culture of environmental sustainability, balancing function and design with existing and foreseen resources.

- A Green Campus is a place where environmentally responsible practice and education go hand in hand and where environmentally responsible tenets are borne out by example.
- The Green Campus institution is a laboratory of self scrutiny, experimentation, and application. At its best, it is a model environmental community where operational functions, business practices, academic programs, and people are interlinked, providing educational and practical value to the institution, the region, and the world.

“An enduring environmental ethic will aim to preserve not only the health and freedom of our species, but access to the world in which the human spirit was born.”

“The Diversity of Life”
E.O. Wilson



Why Should Your Campus Be a Green Campus?

As an institution of higher learning, the seeds of change that are sown on your campus will grow and, ultimately, disperse far afield. The Green Campus concept offers your institution the opportunity to take the lead in rethinking its environmental culture and developing new paradigms for solving problems that are local, national, and global in nature.

Greening the campus is about sweeping away wasteful inefficiencies and ushering in positive changes that address the daily, practical aspects of campus life—correct disposal, handling, and storage of cleaning chemicals and materials associated with labs and automotive shops; purchase of environmentally friendly supplies; effectiveness of recycling programs—or larger, big-picture investments.

How Do You Get Started?

If you wish to get started on a Green Campus program, contact the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE) or the US EPA-Region 1 NEEATeam. Greening the nation’s campuses is a priority for both organizations.

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- **For More Information** about campus environmental compliance issues and Greening the Campus, go to the EPA-Region 1 Colleges and Universities Web site at

www.epa.gov/region01/steward/univ/index.html

This publication is a cooperative project of US EPA-Region 1 NEEATeam, PETE and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission.

Greening the Campus...



*Where Practice
and Education
Go Hand in Hand*