



Office of Sustainability

"Shrinking our footprint, raising awareness"

Fall 2009 Newsletter

From the Director...



The University of Oregon has been engaged in sustainability activities for over 20 years. The Office of Sustainability was established in 2007 to support faculty, staff, and student sustainability initiatives, develop a carbon emissions reduction plan for the university, act as a clearinghouse for the wide range of sustainability activities in operations and academics, and track our institution's progress towards sustainability. My three student employees and I have developed a number of programs and services to help the university community learn about and engage with sustainability issues. Examples include the Eugene Green Resource Guide, Project Tomato, the UO Climate Action Plan, the Student Sustainability Fund, and the OUS Sustainability conference. You can find out about these and hundreds of other sustainability initiatives by exploring our online database [here](#). You'll quickly see why we consistently rank amongst the top green institutions in the nation. This quarterly newsletter highlights some of these efforts, as well as other green events taking place around the UO Campus.

Sincerely,
Steve Mital



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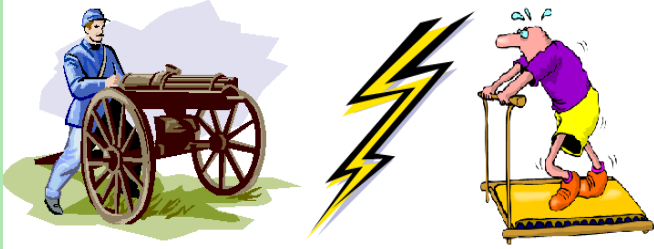


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Activities & Engagement

Energy Civil War!



Come be part of the first annual Energy Civil War, and help the Ducks *shock* the Beavers. Both the UO and OSU recreation centers are equipped with ReRev elliptical machines that generate energy which helps power the buildings during workouts. From Monday, 11/30 to Thursday, 12/3, all time spent on the ReRev machines at the UO Student Recreation Center will count toward our school's total energy generated for this contest. The school that generates the most energy by noon on game day wins! This event is sponsored by the UO Office of Sustainability, PARS, and the Sustainable Business Group. At OSU, it is sponsored by the Student Sustainability Initiative. For more information, contact the contest coordinator at esustain@uoregon.edu.

UO Students Take Part in Sustainable Cities Initiative

This fall, 250 UO students in several classes are taking part in the Sustainable Cities Year Initiative, where one Oregon City a year is chosen to be the focus of real world projects and applied learning, in order to help those cities transition to a more sustainable future. These students, from programs in the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, are focusing their efforts on Gresham, Oregon—the fourth largest city in the state. Students are working with city leaders to improve the livability of Gresham through ecological design, sustainable urban design, and sustainable land use. A recent article in The Portlander, found [here](#), describes this project more in-depth. Descriptions of the courses involved and a calendar of Sustainable Cities Year events are found [on this Web page](#).

PowerShift Summit

The first ever Regional PowerShift Summit is coming to the UO November 6-8. This summit will involve trainings, networking and political action to promote renewable energy and reduce our nation's dependence on fossil fuels. You can register [here](#) to join the UO summit. For information about other events around the country, visit the [national PowerShift website](#).

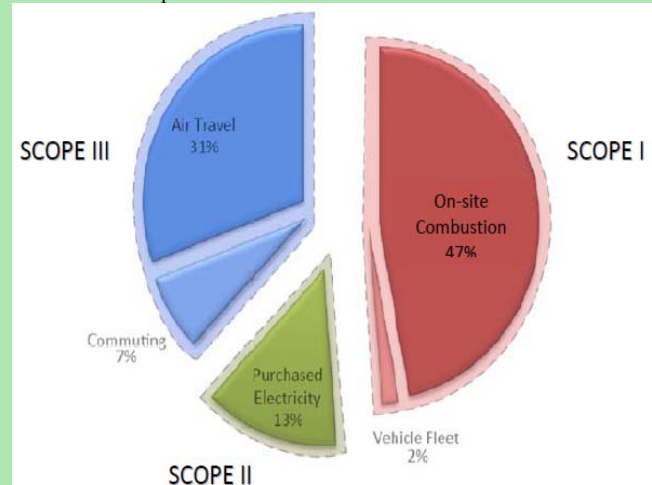
News

UO DRAFT

Climate Action Plan Released

The UO Office of Sustainability has released the DRAFT Climate Action Plan for Campus— detailing UO's carbon emissions, as well as strategies for achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Work on this plan began after former UO President David Frohnmayer signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment in 2007— along with 650 other colleges and universities.

A key element of the plan is the campus emissions profile. Total emissions for 2008 equaled 70,778 MT eCO₂. The following chart shows the share of emissions from different campus activities.



Students, faculty and staff are asked to review and provide feedback on this plan by November 30, 2009. You can read about this plan, comment online and download it at [this Office of Sustainability Web page](#).

ASUO Launches Weekly Farmers Market near Campus

Beginning the last week of October and for the first three Thursdays in November, the ASUO is running a local farmers market at the corner of East 13th Ave and University Street. The event will include produce from Slo Farm, McKenzie River Organic Farm, Gathering Together Farm and Lonesome Whistle Farm. Both the ASUO and local farmers see this as a great way to expose students to local food producers as well as new healthy eating alternatives. Read more about the market in [this Daily Emerald article](#).



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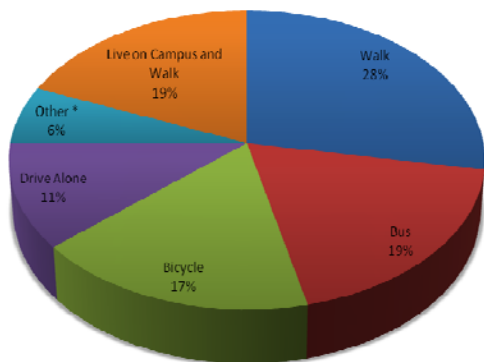
"Shrinking our footprint, raising awareness"

News!

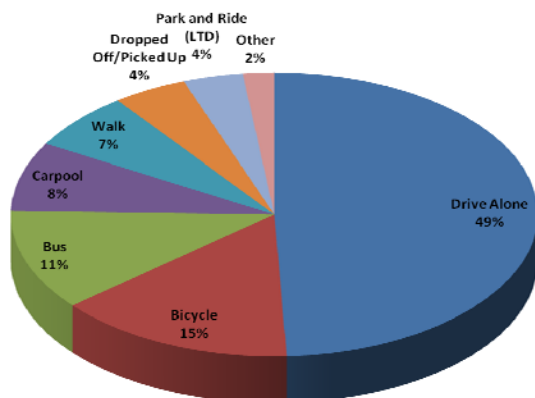
Results of UO Commute Survey Released

The UO Office of Sustainability has released the results of a commute survey showing student and staff modes of transportation to the UO and other universities in the PAC-10. The results show that the percentage of UO students who drive alone to school is far lower than the rest of the PAC-10— 11% at UO versus 35% in the PAC-10 as a whole. Among UO employees, 49% drive alone versus 57% in the PAC-10. Both student and employee results from this survey are shown in the pie charts below.

2009 University of Oregon Student Commute Mode



2008-2009 University of Oregon Employee Commute Mode



More News!

UO Starts New Car Sharing Program

For an environmentally-friendly alternative to car ownership, the UO has signed a one-year contract with the WeCar car-sharing system. With a \$50 membership and \$20 initiation fee, UO faculty, staff, and students will now have 24/7 access to fuel-efficient hybrid cars when needed. The UO has two designated WeCar parking spots outside the Living Learning Center. Program membership cards are read by sensors that open the door, and the keys and gas card are found in the glove box. One car will be offered for every 40 program members. Read an article about this program [here](#).

Oregon Leadership in Sustainability Certificate

The Provost and Office of Sustainability worked together to fund the creation of a new Leadership in Sustainability certificate program. The Environmental Studies Program won an internal competition and was awarded \$95,000 to develop the post-baccalaureate certificate. The intensive, one-year Oregon Leadership in Sustainability program will be launched in the fall of 2010. Students will learn about key challenges facing Oregon and team up with leading businesses and agencies to work on solutions.

Green Rankings Grade Sustainability at the UO

Several "green rankings" have recently placed the UO among the most sustainable institutions of higher learning. In September, the Sierra Club ranked the UO 25th among "planet-preserving colleges and universities," with our highest score being in the "energy" category. Also this year, The Sustainable Endowments Institute (GreenReportCard.org) gave the UO an overall "B" grade, but giving high individual marks for our food and recycling programs. For the third year in a row, UO was listed on its Campus Sustainability Leader list. Other ratings have been even better, with the Princeton Review's Green Honor Roll and Greenopia's rating system both placing us among the Top 10. Still, Steve Mital with the UO Office of Sustainability states that, "It's impossible to accurately compare institutions apples to apples. At best, these rankings help us assess our own progress towards sustainability. And to a lesser extent, they give us a sense of what's happening across the nation." A recent article highlights these results, and describes how sustainability is becoming an increasingly important factor in students' school preference. This article is found [here](#).



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Ongoing Projects

Environmental Issues Committee

The UO Office of Sustainability provides logistical support to the Environmental Issues Committee (EIC). The EIC, formed in 1997, is a working group of students, faculty and staff that raises awareness about environmental issues on campus, identifies problems and concerns, and institutes University policy for environmental issues. They advise the Vice President for Finance and Administration, and report to the University Senate at least once each year. Members include students, administration, faculty and staff. More information about the EIC can be found [here](#).

Rec Center ReCardio System



Over 3,000 students and staff use the Student Recreation Center each day. Now they can generate electricity during their workouts and learn about renewable power.

ReCardio is a new technology designed for elliptical machines. It captures the kinetic energy generated by exercise and converts it to electricity. The UO Office of Sustainability won a grant from EWEB to help purchase and install ReCardio in 20 units at the Student Recreation Center. A central display tracks energy generation so users can get a feel for how much energy is required to produce a kilowatt-hour. The UO is amongst the first in the nation to install the equipment. An AP article promoting UO's system appeared in nearly 40 newspapers across the country and the UK. The system which cost \$14,000.00 can provide enough electricity to run a small energy efficient house in Eugene. For more information about this system, visit [this Web page](#).

Eugene Green Resource Guide

The UO Office of Sustainability has released the Green Resource Guide for Sustainable Eugene. Recent graduate Shelley Bowerman designed it to help new students learn about the green opportunities our community offers. It provides listings for environmentally-friendly housing, restaurants, stores, transportation options, organizations and more. You can access the guide [here](#).

Grants

EPA Grants for Green Student Projects

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as part of the Greater Research Opportunities program, has made available 30 grants of \$46,500 for undergraduates interested in taking their environmental education to the next level. This money will support students' academic costs during their junior and senior years, and a summer – long internship with the EPA. Students in environmentally-oriented fields are encouraged to apply. For more information, visit [the grant Web page](#).

Meyer Fund for Sustainable Environment

The Meyer Fund for Sustainable Environment distributes \$200,000.00 annually to UO and LCC faculty. Funds support new (and green) research directions and curriculum. Steve Mital, with the UO Office of Sustainability, co-chairs the Fund with Jim Hutchison (Chemistry). This year's proposal deadline is November 23rd. To find out more about the program and recent winners, visit [the program Web page](#).

Student Sustainability Fund

The Student Sustainability Fund distributes \$35,000.00 annually to student groups through a competitive grant process. A student advisory committee reviews proposals and makes funding recommendations to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The program is managed by the Office of Sustainability. Funds this year will purchase bike racks for the student Bike Loan Program, solar panels for the Center for the Advancement of Sustainable Living, carbon offsets for the EMU, a dishwasher for the EMU food court, support the creation of an pre-freshman orientation trip that focuses on local food sustainability, and specialized equipment that allows the Outdoor Program Barn use rainwater to flush its toilets. More information about the fund can be found at [this Web page](#).

To suggest content for the Winter Quarter Newsletter, contact esustain@uoregon.edu
UO Office of Sustainability <http://sustainability.uoregon.edu>