



Environmental Sustainability

Environmental stewardship is a cornerstone of Columbia University's commitment to being a responsible member of the community. A longtime practitioner of environmental sustainability, the University works actively to maintain a safe environment for staff, students, and neighbors. In 2006, the University established the Department of Environmental Stewardship to initiate, coordinate, and implement programs to reduce the University's environmental footprint. The proposed academic expansion in the old manufacturing zone of Manhattanville in West Harlem would provide an excellent opportunity for Columbia to utilize best practices in environmentally sustainable construction and design to help revitalize this area.

Green Construction and Design

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) selected the University's Manhattanville proposal for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Neighborhood Design pilot program. The plan commits to incorporating smart growth, new urbanism, and "green" building design principles. On existing campuses, several buildings under construction are registered as LEED buildings, and work on the University's first green dorm is under way.

Climate Commitment

Earlier this year, the University became a charter member of the Challenge Partner Program initiated by Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Columbia and eight other universities agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent over the next 10 years—roughly twice the reduction called for by the Kyoto Protocol. The University is also conducting a study of its greenhouse gas emission sources and from it will develop targets to meet the commitment.

The University has already begun reducing its greenhouse gas emissions:

- All buildings at the Morningside campus and two satellite campuses have been separately metered to track energy consumption.
- Columbia participates in a "demand-response" program, taking energy off the grid during peak demand periods.
- As older vehicles in the University's fleet are retired, they are replaced with hybrids, which burn significantly less fuel.
- Columbia uses Energy Star appliances, compact fluorescent bulbs, timed lighting controls, and energy-efficient windows.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Columbia reduces its environmental impact through recycling, proper disposal of waste, and reduced consumption:

- The University has a comprehensive recycling program. The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory campus placed first in the paper recycling and per capita categories and third overall in the 2007 nationwide Recyclemania competition.
- Through Give + Go Green and Clean + Go Green, students, staff, and faculty collect books, clothing, and furniture that would be discarded and distribute them to local nonprofits.
- Surplus food from dining halls is donated to City Harvest.
- Columbia is establishing a Surplus Reuse Program to keep furniture and equipment out of landfills.

Green Environment

- The University works with local parks on planting and other projects.
- This fall will see the first "green roofs" on campus, reducing the urban heat island effect and storm water runoff.
- Columbia's grounds program uses no chemical pesticides.
- The University uses "green-seal certified" cleaning supplies and environmentally friendly paint.

Health and Safety

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety utilizes safety training, laboratory and chemical safety, hazardous waste management, industrial hygiene, asbestos and lead management, biological safety, fire safety, chemical tracking, and radiation protection. In addition, regular third-party inspections assure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

For More Information

To learn more about Columbia's environmental stewardship programs, visit www.environment.columbia.edu.