

THE CAMPUS GREEN

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Get ***INVOLVED*** on Campus

As student, faculty, and staff returned from Christmas break, many are wondering what they can do to help make our campus a more sustainable and environmentally friendly place. And while one feels these issues are too big and too complex to tackle, there are many small-scale things that everyone could do - and should do! - to get involved.

When it comes to conservation, use LED light bulbs instead of incandescent or CFL bulbs (see image below). Make sure to turn off lights, TV’s, and computers when leaving the room. And please keep your windows closed when the heat or AC is on, as this is a huge waste of energy! Students, or anyone, should report right away any leaking faucets or showers. This is an easy way to conserve water resources. And everyone on campus should have the means to keep recyclables separate from their trash, with the desk-side blue bin in dorms and offices.

Other ways to be involved include avoiding styrofoam at Dunkin’ and Starbucks. You can get free koozies in Harkins LL18, or you can bring your own mug and pay a cheaper “refill” price. You can get a reusable straw and avoid plastic disposable straws. When going to the bookstore, you can bring your own reusable bag rather than using a disposable plastic bag. All of these small, slight changes keep you “involved” and can ultimately make a big difference!

**HELP
CONSERVE
ENERGY...**

**TURN OFF
LIGHTS
WHEN
LEAVING**



Light Bulb Comparison

Incandescent bulb

- Gives off 90% of energy as heat, not light
- Average lifespan: 750-2,000 hours



CFL bulb

- Uses 75% less energy than a traditional incandescent bulb
- Average lifespan: 8,000-10,000 hours



LED bulb

- Uses less energy than CFLs, which means energy cost per year is less
- Estimated lifespan: 30,000-50,000



The Campus Green

**MAXIMUM
EFFICIENCY**

**Every
drop
counts!**



Plastic Pollution Poses Plenty of Problems

We are inundated by plastic. According to the National Geographic society, since 1950, when mass productions of plastics began, we have created 8.3 metric tons of plastic. Of that, more than 6.3 metric tons have become waste. And current estimates show that 8 million pieces of plastic enter the oceans *every day!*

Plastic never fully decomposes, rather, it ultimately only breaks down into micro-plastics: tiny pieces of minuscule plastic. In fact, scientists at Maine's Marine and Environmental Research Institute found that, on average, there are "17 pieces of micro-plastic per liter of seawater". In fact, plastic debris in the ocean may actually outweigh fish by 2050! Micro-plastics have the ability to culminate embedded in the tissues of fish and other sea animals. So, not only are the sea life adversely impacted by the plastic, but human health is also at risk, through the threat of bioaccumulation. This happens because these toxins travel up the food chain, and eventually end up in the fish and seafood that we consume.

If this concerns you, you can reduce your plastic consumption by trying to cut back on single-use plastics. Single-use plastic is often used for only a matter of minutes yet litter land and waterways for eons. According to the US EPA, there are nearly 380 *billion* plastic bags in the ocean! Many cities and towns are now banning plastic bags, but you can recycle yours by returning them to a supermarket, or better yet, bring reusable bags when you go out shopping! In the United States alone, nearly 500 million plastic straws are used every day! Get a reusable straw, or drink out of the cup! You can stop buying bottled water and get a refillable mug! Tap water is as good if not better than most bottled water. And if you dine out at a cafeteria often, bring your own cutlery and avoid the plastic cutlery they often supply.

By making these small, easy changes, and encouraging others to do so, you can do your part in leaving a cleaner and greener planet for future generations.

DID YOU KNOW: End to end, straws used in the US in a single day could circle the planet more than two and a half times.



HOLD THE SALT



Every winter nearly 20 million tons of salt is applied to the roads and walkways in the US to reduce ice coverage and slippery surfaces. This salt, which frequently is applied in huge excesses, can cause damage to our ecosystems.

When the snow melts, the road salt is carried with the water runoff towards nearby vegetation, storm drains, and bodies of water. In nature, salt absorbs a considerable amount of the water that would normally be accessible by plant roots. Despite soil moisture, large quantities of salt can create a drought-like environment for plants. This damage to vegetation can have a significant impact on wildlife by eliminating food resources, shelter, and breeding or nesting sites.

Dr. Jonathon Richardson from the PC biology department provided some helpful insight on more environment alternatives. He shared some of the innovative ideas that have started to evolve, like applying a brine solution or beet juice to the road *before* the storm to delay ice formation. Another common practice is to scoop up the salt that remains in excess and then save it to use for the next storm.

There is still much to be researched about the impacts of salt and the alternative solutions to using road salt. In the meantime, just be aware of when, where, and how much you use, as it does impact the environment.

PC Recycling Totals 2018

Mixed Recyclables	270,880 lbs.
Cardboard	127,060 lbs.
E-Waste	12,601 lbs.
Fluorescent Lights	4,910 lbs.
Ballasts	5,711 lbs.
Batteries	1,376 lbs.



Pictured above is the build up of road salt that accumulates. Theoretically, if applied in the right proportions rather than in excess, there should be no buildup or white pavements after a storm.

