

# Yale School of Public Health Sustainability Action Plan

## Sustainability at Yale University

Yale University is dedicated to an integrated, comprehensive approach to policy and operations that balances ecosystem health with human health and economic viability in order to demonstrate that sustainability is both feasible and affordable. To accomplish this goal, the University integrates sustainable practices into the fabric of the institutional decision-making at all levels.

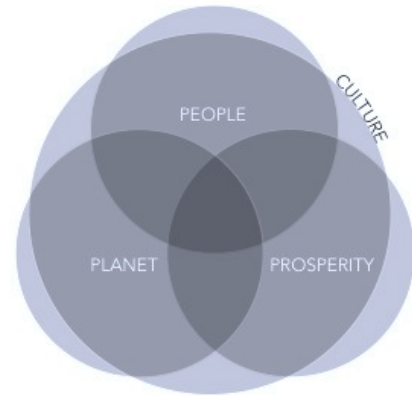


Figure 1: Sustainability values

Each unit on campus has a unique cultural context. Successful implementation of sustainability tactics will rely on efforts to refine tools and tactics to suit this diversity of disciplines and perspectives

## Yale 2013-2016 Sustainability Strategic Plan

The *Yale 2013-2016 Sustainability Strategic Plan* contains 26 goals divided into five categories, listed below.

### Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Yale is committed to comprehensive reduction of energy consumption. This can be achieved by both designing and updating buildings to be efficient and by educating members of the community to use less energy. It also incorporates a robust renewable energy portfolio and universal efforts to increase fuel efficiency.

### Natural and Built Environment

Yale values the natural and built environment and is managing the campus in ways that improve the quality of natural resources and help ensure a healthy and vibrant community.

### Materials Management

Supply purchasing and disposal are directly connected. Considering the two processes in parallel provides a systemic approach that focuses on better-quality products as well as minimizing waste.

## Food and Well-Being

The health and well-being of the people who study and work on Yale's campus can be improved and maintained by considering a range of choices: food choices offered, cleaning products used and community support offered.

## Sustainability Leadership & Capacity Building

Yale has established itself as a global sustainability leader. This is enhanced by efforts to incorporate principles of sustainability into everyday behavior, operational practices and research and teaching.

The Plan is available in full online at [sustainability.yale.edu](http://sustainability.yale.edu)

## **This Document**

The Yale Sustainability Strategic Plan includes a component of leadership and capacity building. Part of this initiative is the establishment and implementation of sustainability plans for each of the professional schools. These plans intend to support university-wide goals while reflecting the physical constructs and constraints of each School as well as the intersection of each discipline with sustainability.

## **About the Yale School of Public Health**

The Yale School of Public Health (YSPH) strives to lead in protecting and improving the health of the public. Its mission describes a focus on interdisciplinary scholarship, innovative research, policy analysis and education with the aim of serving local, national and international communities with knowledge and expertise.

## **Public Health and Sustainability**

Public health and sustainability are inextricably linked. The tenets of sustainability at Yale encompass ecosystem health, human health, and economic viability. Human health is directly impacted by our natural and built environments. Air pollution may cause respiratory diseases, access to nutritious food and physical activity may alleviate the burden of some chronic diseases, and climate change will affect human ecosystems, such as causing vector-borne diseases to be more widespread. YSPH faculty, staff and students also conduct innovative research on health care policy and cost effectiveness. The economic landscape of the current health care situation in the U.S. and around the globe will likely face greater challenges stemming from

environmental impacts of human activity if actions to mitigate or adapt do not take place.

As global environmental crises worsen and demand on resources including food and energy increase, it is critical that public health research and education remain at the forefront. YSPH aims to support a culture of sustainability through its academic and research priorities and through the way we conduct our work every day.

## **Sustainability Successes To-Date**

### Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Conducted night-time energy survey and audit in May of 2014

### Natural and Built Environment

- LEED Certification was obtained for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> floors
  - The 7<sup>th</sup> floor received the CT Green Building Award
- LEED Requirements for new labs have been met
- A/V upgrades in conference rooms and classrooms to facilitate paperless meetings
- Picnic tables installed to promote outdoor use
- Plumbing and electrical upgrades requested in four high-traffic restrooms and common rooms
- Additional bike racks requested
- Urban Meadow requested

### Materials Management

- Implemented PaperCut for paper waste minimization and monitoring
- Administrative offices' conversion to flash drives, file share software, and YSPH intranet to replace volumes of paper documents distributed annually
- YSPH flash drive giveaways to all faculty and staff
- Compost pilot completed, now being used on 5 floors
- Lab recycling program implemented on 2-3 floors
- Furniture re-use, repurpose practice
- Green Purchasing promotion
- Pen pails
- Central toner recycling site
- YSPH travel mug sale/education campaign to replace paper cups
- Office Supply Swaps held annually or semi-annually

## Food and Well-Being

- Water filtration dispensers have replaced most bottled water units
- Conversion to water pitchers to replace bottled water at school-wide events; replicated by some departments
- Eliminated soda and pizza from Deans' Office-hosted events
- Use and promotion of local (and preferably environmentally responsible) catering vendors
- Advocated for (recent) healthier vending options; ongoing

## Sustainability Leadership and Capacity Building

- Engagement since 2007
- 2012 Strategic Plan
- Sustainability web page creation in 2012
- Monthly sustainability article in YSPH e-newsletter
- Annual Celebrate Sustainability events/campaigns
- Green prizes for BYOs at school-wide social events
- Promotion of Green certifications for workplace, lab and events
- Community impact: Common Ground HS Urban Farm Workday, New Haven Land Trust Community Garden Clean-up, Community Carbon Fund fundraiser
- Partnership with SAYPH (YSPH student organization)

## **Sustainability Action Items for the Yale School of Public Health**

### Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Attain observations and recommendations from night-time energy survey and consider ways to improve temperature and lighting controls and peripherals use
- Evaluate ways to stabilize the heating and cooling in the LEPH lower levels and at 47 College, and the economic benefits of doing so

### Natural and Built Environment

- Explore the possibility of placing an urban meadow near the YSPH campus
- Install more bike racks for YSPH students, faculty and staff
- Complete renovation of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, attaining the goal of LEED certification

### Materials Management

- Continued collaboration and training with maintenance staff and YSPH community to ensure proper recycling practices are used

- Explore and implement personal printer policy and double-sided printing defaults; PaperCut evaluations
- Green Purchasing promotion; WB Mason, Eli Surplus Exchange, Supply Swaps

### Food and Well-Being

- Continued advocacy for healthy vending options and policy and healthy catering
- Establish YSPH as a smoke-free zone
- Explore soda ban

### Sustainability Leadership and Capacity Building

- Form Green Team/Task Force(s) with faculty, students and staff
- Building on school mission, integrate sustainability into curriculum, highlight sustainability related research and academic events
- Strengthen student engagement, leveraging existing partnership, interest and potential learning opportunities
  - Set up a committee or team of students to support efforts and engage others, potentially modeled after other professional schools' groups
  - Presentation at New Student Orientation
- Explore collaboration with CARE to engage the New Haven community on sustainable land projects and increase awareness about environmental health impacts
- Ensure communication about existing efforts and interest groups relating to sustainability in order to avoid redundancy, encourage collaboration and emphasize sustainability efforts and culture at YSPH
  - This should be attempted within the YSPH as well as between Yale College, the Graduate School and other professional schools, capitalizing on support from established sustainability efforts and exchanging ideas on how to implement new ones
- Continue to encourage Green Workplace Certification and Green Event Certification, and continue collaborating with the Yale School of Medicine on Green Labs
- Continued annual campaigns to sustain awareness and advance YSPH sustainability goals
- Consider allocation of resources for incentives and for a student and/or staff employee to support and oversee YSPH sustainability initiatives