

# CLOSING THE LOOP AT CARLETON

Engaging our students, campus and community to reduce waste, CO<sub>2</sub> and energy

# CARBON FREE BY 2050

## Sustainability at Carleton



Carleton College has a long tradition of sustainability efforts, dating back at least to the first Earth Day in 1970, where students and faculty planted 40,000 trees in the campus Arboretum. Since signing the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in 2007 and writing a Climate Action Plan in 2011 which targets net zero carbon emissions by 2050, Carleton has reduced overall emissions by 18%. **After current projects are completed, Carleton will have reduced its total carbon emissions by 38%, well beyond its original 2020 interim goal of a 21% reduction.**

Carleton is home to three LEED Gold buildings and the first college-owned commercial-scale wind turbine, which was installed in 2004 and serves the public grid. Carleton's second wind turbine, installed in 2011, is tied to the campus grid and directly provides one-third of Carleton's annual electricity use. **Together, the two wind turbines produce over half of the electrical usage of the campus.** Most campus lighting systems have been or will soon be converted to LED or fluorescent.

Carleton is also making history by becoming **one of the first colleges to build a campus-wide heating system with low-temperature hot water and geothermal heat pumps** as its main source of heating and cooling, enabling the campus to **completely transition off of steam heating by 2022.** The geothermal system will begin serving the east side of campus in fall 2019.

The Sustainability Office now has two staff members dedicated to advancing Carleton's Climate Action Plan initiatives, and each year, 10-12 student Sustainability Assistants (STAs) conduct projects to further advance Carleton's sustainability goals for waste, food, outreach, energy, and events. Carleton's Sustainability efforts are also integrated into the Carleton Community and Civic Engagement programs where students work with local NGOs and the schools to help with outreach and education more broadly. Carleton staff are also playing leadership roles in the planning for a Northfield city-wide Climate Action Plan.

Continuing this long tradition of sustainability efforts, Carleton has always worked to reduce waste. In every campus building, there are "triple bins" that co-locate compost, recycle, and landfill options. A crew of Custodial Waste Busters monitor waste on a daily basis, and a Zero Waste Task Force promotes waste reduction across campus. **Currently, 55% of Carleton's standard waste stream is diverted from the landfill.**

But there is still work to do. Carleton is engaging with students, campus, and community on various waste initiatives, and exploring paths to "zero waste." **Carleton is focusing on moving from a linear consumption model to a circular one.**



**4000** box lunches were served at Commencement  
**97%** of waste diverted

The Comprehensive Student Recycling and Composting Guide provides essential information to all students.



### Lighten Up Garage Sale

An annual event that diverts much of the waste left over from student move-out each spring. Profits go to three community non-profits.

In 2018, the sale diverted **23 tons of stuff** and raised over **\$39,000** for charity.



### Food Recovery Network

In 2017, an average of 1.5 tons of food per 10-week term was recovered and donated to 8 community partners.

**68** FOOD RECOVERY NETWORK VOLUNTEERS

**9.5 TONS OF FOOD** RECOVERED BETWEEN 2014-2017



### Repair Fair

Community members, students, and staff can receive assistance in fixing and mending household items and learn about reuse and repair alternatives.

Reduced annual hauling fees by **\$10,000**

because of monitoring and consolidating outdoor waste bins by our Custodial Waste Busters.

### Students Organized for the Protection of the Environment (SOPE)

Each year, this group proposes new projects to expand compost, recycling, and reuse initiatives. Most recently, SOPE introduced a Terracycle chip bag and granola bar wrapper recycling program for these hard to manage items.



**100%** of campus buildings have composting and recycling bins

### Zero Waste Planning

In 2018, Carleton's Sustainability and Custodial departments partnered to complete a 360° Assessment of the campus' waste infrastructure. This document will guide the campus in zero waste planning efforts, coordinated by the Post-Landfill Action Network.

### Carleton Student Organic Farm

Students operate a 1.5-acre farm that uses organic techniques. It boasts drip irrigation, and a hoop house, among other innovations.



**100%** of produce is sold to the campus dining hall.

The farm delivered **3 tons of produce** in 2017



### Take Back the Tap

A student organization that works to reduce the amount of bottled water consumed on campus.

Carleton has over **20 water filling stations on campus** to reduce the use of disposable plastic bottles.

**65%** green CLEANING PRODUCTS purchased annually

### Compostables Store

An easy way for departments to purchase compostable plates, napkins, utensils, etc. for campus picnics and events.

**27%** of Carleton's food purchases are considered "real" as defined by the REAL FOOD CHALLENGE organization

Legend: ● = STUDENT INITIATIVE ● = DEPARTMENT INITIATIVE