

UC  
ECO  
OFFICE



UC   
UNIVERSITY OF  
CANTERBURY  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha*  
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

# UC Eco Office Guide

Sustainability Projects Coordinator, Sustainability Office





# Introduction



This guide is designed to stimulate discussion amongst staff and students who use offices at the University of Canterbury.

The University has made a commitment to become a sustainable operation in its activities. Many staff and students are looking for ways that they can use their office environments more sustainably. Because of this, the UC Sustainability Office has developed a UC Eco-Office Programme.

We believe there is now a much better understanding of the environmental challenges facing us as a University community and as inhabitants of planet Earth. For example, climate change is now understood to be severely affecting many parts of the globe, and most predictions point to a collapse of weather systems capable of supporting human life. More significantly, we have begun to realise that human activity is causing this change. We need to make changes to the way we do our work, and we need to make those changes now.

The changes we make here at the University of Canterbury can have a massive positive impact.

First, we are a community of more than 17,000 people. The impact we currently have on the environment is, in and of itself, huge.

Second, we are training our nation's future leaders and the positive changes we make will generate further positive changes outside of them.

Third, we are looked to by those not at University as leaders and trend-setters. The example we set together sends a powerful signal out into our community.

This guide offers some practical examples of changes that we can make in our offices that will make a positive difference. We are grateful to Edith Cowan University for allowing us their guide as a starting point.



# What's happening to our Planet?

At the root of our environmental problems lies the fact that most of our daily activities are just not sustainable. This means that they require the consumption of more resources than are ecologically available, produce waste and pollution, and compromise the ecological integrity of the natural systems on which we depend.

Here are a few reasons to stop and think about how we impact on these systems.

- If everyone in the world used resources like New Zealand, we would need 2.43 planets to sustain our way of life.<sup>1</sup>
- We emit 0.2% of global world emissions even though our population is only 0.063 of the total world population.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2011, New Zealanders send about 2.461 million tonnes of waste to landfill. A 2008 survey of waste composition in municipal landfills showed that approximately three-quarters of the waste disposed of could have been potentially diverted by being recovered, reused or recycled.<sup>3</sup>
- Analysis of New Zealand's national water quality monitoring network data reveals significant declines in almost all measured water quality parameters over the last 20 years.<sup>4</sup>

Some key global sustainability megaforges will very likely have a real impact on all of our lives by 2035 – just over two decades away.<sup>5</sup>

1. Total world population will increase by 20%. Flow on effects include: raw materials extraction increasing by 55%, water demand by 53%, and food demand by 50%. Key staples food prices could increase by a staggering 70-90%.

<sup>1</sup> Source: [www.footprintnetwork.org/images/trends/2012/pdf/2012\\_newzealand.pdf](http://www.footprintnetwork.org/images/trends/2012/pdf/2012_newzealand.pdf). Accessed 18/12/2012

<sup>2</sup> Source: [www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/climate/greenhouse-gas-inventory-2010-snapshot/index.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/climate/greenhouse-gas-inventory-2010-snapshot/index.html). Accessed 18/12/2012

<sup>3</sup> Source: [www.mfe.govt.nz/environmental-reporting/waste/solid-waste/quantity.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/environmental-reporting/waste/solid-waste/quantity.html) Accessed 18/12/2012

<sup>4</sup> Source: [http://awsassets.wfnz.panda.org/downloads/earth\\_summit\\_2012\\_v3.pdf](http://awsassets.wfnz.panda.org/downloads/earth_summit_2012_v3.pdf). Accessed 18/12/2012

<sup>5</sup> Source: <http://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Pages/building-business-value.aspx>. Accessed 18/12/2012

2. Energy related CO<sup>2</sup> emissions is predicted to increase by 20%
3. Supplies of cheap, easily accessed fossil fuel will decrease, but demand for primary energy increases by 33%.
4. The overall human ecological footprint is estimated to increase by 33%, but terrestrial species abundance could reduce by up to 17%.

The world we live in will become increasingly uncertain and complex, with fewer and fewer resources to draw upon to stay resilient in this context.

## We can make the difference!

We all have an impact on our natural environment – from the energy we use to power lighting, air conditioning and office equipment, to how we travel to and from our place of work and even what we choose to buy in the way of office supplies.

However for this reason we can all make the difference, simply by making informed decisions and changing some of our office practices. For example, you could:

- Help implement initiatives in your area that support more sustainable behaviour,
- Point out activities in your work area that could be changed to be more environmentally friendly,
- Increase your own and fellow staff's awareness of current environmental issues,
- Increase your own and fellow staff's awareness of the impacts our University has on the environment and how they can help.

## Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme

UC is the first Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme (CEMARS) registered university in the southern hemisphere. CEMARS certification involves taking accountability and action against greenhouse gas emissions generated as a result of the universities business.

For more information, visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/)



## Why Go Green?

Most people are beginning to realise that the goods and services on which we rely come with an ecological impact– and that we cannot continue purely extractive practices indefinitely – we will simply run out of 'stuff'!

Additionally, addressing the environmental challenge can generate many benefits for an organisation.

### It makes good business-sense

Minimising waste, increasing resource efficiency and developing information systems as part of improved environmental management often results in increased productivity and reduced waste. By implementing the simple Eco-Office initiatives outlined within this guide, you will be helping to reduce costs associated with resource consumption and operations.

For example, by ensuring that all copiers print duplex as default, you can expect to reduce your work area's paper consumption by nearly half!

### It improves corporate image

Organisations that adopt environmentally sustainable practices have an 'edge' over those that don't and can derive significant marketing and leadership benefits.

In 2013, 200 of the Global 500 companies reporting to the Global 500 Climate Change Report noted that acting on climate change can help to enhance their reputation, and 332 have integrated climate change into their wider business strategy.

Source: <https://www.cdp.net/cdpresults/cdp-global-500-climate-change-report-2013.pdf>

### It's our social responsibility

Organisations are increasingly being called upon by the community to not only adequately manage their environmental and social impacts but further, to add value to our society.

Universities can answer this call by providing appropriate environmental education to staff and students, ensuring that impacts from operations are minimised and engaging the broader community in its programs and environmental initiatives.



# UC'S Eco-Office Programme



UC's Eco-Office Programme is a means of increasing staff awareness of the environmental impacts associated with daily work practices and to encourage and facilitate environmentally friendly alternatives. It is a great way for staff to learn more about environmental issues and what can be done at work to reduce our ecological impact.

It is also an excellent opportunity for staff and postgraduate students to engage in problem solving and work as part of a team to achieve change.

Thank you for your interest in the Eco Office Guide. The best way to start is to try one or two simple actions and change things slowly over time. You might even think of a relevant action that is not included in the guide! If you have, go for it and check if the UC Sustainability Office can support you in any way.

- 1 Okeover Stream restoration materials
- 2 Fair Trade tea and coffee
- 3 Durable mugs for meetings, not disposable
- 4 Water from a tap, not bought in plastic bottles
- 5 Knitting from re-used wool
- 6 Recycling information clear
- 7 Eco My Flat information
- 8 Poster for eco-living workshops
- 9 Office plants
- 10 Seeds saved from the Okeover Community Garden
- 11 Herbs for tea grown in the Okeover Community Garden



## How it works

There are lots of different ways to participate in the Eco Office Programme – try one or all of them!

Visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/) to download electronic versions of any of the documents listed below

1. **Read the Eco-Office Guide.** Refer to this guide book to see what others have done and what tips you can try out. Many of these tips are relevant to Eco Office Certification.
2. **Read a guide on 'How To Grow an Eco-Office'.** Refer to this short guide for tips on how to encourage and work with your colleagues on 'greening' your office.
3. **Conduct an Eco-Office Sustainability Assessment.** Download the form and do an assessment of your workplace to collect base-line data about how green your office is. This contributes to the certification process. This is a bit like conducting a health and safety check of your office on behalf of the planet! This assessment is usually conducted by office administrators.
4. **Get Eco Office certified.** Once a base-line assessment has been conducted, there are four levels of certification to achieve.
5. **Join the Eco Office Network.** Meet like-minded staff and get up-skilled on how you can help with UC's sustainability efforts in your day-to-day work. Contact the UC Sustainability Projects Coordinator if you wish to join this network.
6. **Encourage participation** Achieving good Eco-Office practices and sustaining them on an ongoing basis requires good levels of participation, consistent communication, and relevant information for new and existing staff. Page 19 describes key participatory practices required to achieve Eco Office certification. Refer to 'How To Grow an Eco-Office' for tips on how to encourage and work with your colleagues.

## Programme Aims

- Raise staff awareness of the environmental impacts that result from daily office activities and practices
- Provide sustainable alternatives to these practices
- Engage staff in environmental management and decision making
- Reduce the University's overall environmental impact through staff education and behavioural change

## Programme Benefits

- Improve cooperation and communication between staff members
- Improve the public profile of the University
- Reduced costs associated with resource consumption
- Better performance through increased efficiency
- Reduced waste generated and sent to landfill
- Staff develop a broadened understanding of environmental issues
- Being part of the solution

This manual has been developed to help you to make the difference in your office environment by:

- Outlining what you should know about our current environmental management system,
- Providing hints and tips for what you and your department can do, and
- Providing useful statistics and where to go for further information.



# energy



Energy at UC is partly produced from hydro but also from coal, and we use a lot of petroleum-derived energy to move us around. The earth is gifting us energy stored over millennia, but we are using it up at an incredible rate. As well as using it up, we are generating CO<sup>2</sup> emissions that are creating climate change. We are all responsible.

## Effectively harnessing the power of the sun is Isabelle's strongpoint.

Here, good use is made of natural light, but there's a conscious effort to keep down fossil fuel consumption as well. Windows are opened to circulate air rather than using air conditioning, people dress according to the weather, and electronic equipment is switched off when not in use. Eco bulbs are used in the toilets and heaters are always switched off overnight.

- 1 Computer screens are off when not in use
- 2 Dressing appropriately for the climate
- 3 Using open windows, instead of air conditioning
- 4 Good use of natural light, rather than electric lighting
- 5 UC Eco Office information available for coworkers
- 6 Utilising the UC waste system properly
- 7 Electronic equipment is switched off at wall when not in use



# Using energy

**MYTH:** It's better to leave lighting on rather than turn it off and on again due to the current surge. This may have been the case in the past, but the newer starters are better.

**FACT:** The initial strike up current for new bulb types is very short in duration. Therefore it makes sense to turn off lighting when not in use, as it uses much less energy.

**FACT:** In 2013, UC burnt 5062 tonnes of coal for heating (Dovedale and Ilam campus' combined), producing approximately 11136 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent green house gases.

## What you can do

**1. If you want the window open, turn the radiator down first.** Our radiators automatically adjust to their conditions, so if you send cold air from the window over them by opening the window in cooler weather, the radiators will simply work harder, using more energy and heating your office even more.

**2. Use natural light where possible.** Lighting can account for up to 40% of the energy used in our offices. By utilising natural light where possible, you can save a significant amount of energy and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

**3. Turn lights and equipment off when not in use, unless advised not to by ICTS.** This is a simple yet effective way to reduce your energy use. Generally, there should be no need to leave computers on over night. But see point 4 below.

**4. Get your computer settings right** – To change the power management features in Windows 7 go to the control panel, view by 'Small Icons'. Select 'power options' and select the 'power schemes' tab. Choose the minimum power management scheme. Select the 'Turn off Display' option and change to 15 minutes. Select 'Put Computer to Sleep' and change (e.g. to 30 minutes). Turn the screen off when you go to lunch to save further power. In addition to direct energy savings, power managed computers also generate less heat so the savings are multiplied!

Contact ICTS if you are unsure about turning off your computer, or visit [http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/consenergy/when\\_not\\_to\\_switch\\_off.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/consenergy/when_not_to_switch_off.shtml)

**5. Deactivate your screensaver** – these more frequently waste energy rather than save it! Do you run a slide-show of your own photographs as your screensaver? How about turning it off sometimes?

**6. Dress appropriately for the season.** No rocket science here! Make sure that you adapt yourself to your environment, not the other way around. Consider the virtues of cardigans and layers. (A reasonable ambient temperature to adapt around is between 18-23 degrees celsius).

**7. Think about using natural ventilation for cooling in the summer.** Open windows in different parts of the building to create cross ventilation. However if you have mechanical air-conditioning it's usually better to keep window closed so that the air conditioner has a chance to work properly.

**8. Use cold water where possible** – when rinsing out your coffee cup.

## What your department can do

**1. Use efficient lighting.** If you have a maintenance issue, please log a BEIMS request. Go to <http://beims.canterbury.ac.nz/login.asp> to log in.

**2. Use the power down settings on your copier when not in use** – our printers and copiers all come with power management options. Make sure your department activates this feature – and uses it! Contact the copier company for more information.



**Isabel Milward, Team supervisor, Branch Libraries and Learning Hubs**

*“Our building is still hard to get right temperature-wise. But one thing I’m careful about is dressing for the climate. When it’s cold we keep doors closed to keep heat in, and when it’s hot we make the most of natural ventilation. We’re supporting green building initiatives where possible.”*



Natural ventilation



Monitor turned off when not being used



Inventive non-disposable decorations!



Ecobulbs fitted wherever possible



The University of Canterbury is a CEMARS registered University.



# transport



Being social creatures, we move around a lot. How we move is the issue. When we drive to work by ourselves, or go to overseas conferences, we could consider the fossil fuels we're burning more carefully. Can we work from home? Can we telecommute? Could we walk, bus, or bike to work, or use the Lets Carpool scheme?

## **Lisa, Jeanette and Jeffrey bike to University regularly. They reckon it is faster than driving.**

They vary their routes according to the time of day and stick to 'quiet streets' and cycle lanes as much as they can. Plus they save on the cost of fuel and enjoy lots of low impact, moderate exercise.

- 1 Jeanette and Lisa ride their bikes in their work clothes. No need to wear lycra, haul a change of clothes, or take a shower!
- 2 These commuter-style bikes are super-comfortable to ride, with an upright position for the rider. The step-through frames also make it easy to get off and on the bikes. They look great too!
- 3 Sturdy bike racks and a basket for carrying day to day items.
- 4 A chain guard to stop any clothes getting tangled in the chain.
- 5 A cheery bell to alert other cyclists and pedestrians.
- 6 A wheel hub dynamo for the front light – batteries not required.
- 7 A wheel hub dynamo for the rear lights – batteries not required.
- 8 Wide tyres for navigating Christchurch's streets safely and comfortably.





## Using transport

**FACT:** In New Zealand one third of all car trips are under 2km, and two thirds of all car trips are under 6km. It takes about 4–5 minutes to cycle 2km.

**FACT:** For every litre of petrol used, 2.3 kilograms of carbon dioxide are released from a car's exhaust. Vehicle emissions are a major source of air pollution in Christchurch while carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are largely responsible for global warming. Yes, this sounds a lot, but it's actually true.

**FACT:** If you had just one carless day per week, you could reduce your greenhouse gas emissions by up to 20%!

**FACT:** In New Zealand, the driver is the sole occupant of the vehicle in 66% of trips in cars, vans and utes.<sup>1</sup>

**FACT:** Our 2012 Travel survey shows that 54% of UC staff and students use a sustainable form of transport to get to and from the University.

### What you should know

**1. UC has a great infrastructure for bussing, biking and walking.** Visit this map to see what's available, including safe walking routes: [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/documents/Sustainability\\_Map.pdf](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/documents/Sustainability_Map.pdf)

**2. Smaller is better** – Small cars produce significantly less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than large cars and are good for commuting around town.

**3. UC has a carpool system to make it easier to share a ride.** Visit [www.letscarpool.govt.nz/in-your-area/canterbury/employer-schemes-2/university-of-canterbury/](http://www.letscarpool.govt.nz/in-your-area/canterbury/employer-schemes-2/university-of-canterbury/)

**4. Metro bus cards** are now available to purchase from the University of Canterbury Student Union.

### What you can do

**1. Mix and match your transport modes.**

Walk, cycle, or catch public transport instead – even if you drive one less day per week, you'll significantly reduce your impact on the environment.

**2. Plan your day effectively** – Have a meeting? Plan it for the beginning or end of your day to reduce car trips.

**3. Carpool with a workmate** – it's a great way to save money, reduce your emissions and get to know your workmates. Visit [www.letscarpool.govt.nz/](http://www.letscarpool.govt.nz/)

**4 Can you work from home?**

Some departments allow staff to work from home every now and then, which helps to reduce the number of car trips and saves on vehicle emissions.

**5. Give cycling a go!** Go to [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/transport/cycling/tips.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/transport/cycling/tips.shtml) for lots of helpful tips.

**6. Maintain fuel efficiency** – A poorly maintained car uses a lot more fuel than a well maintained car. So if you do drive, make sure you get your car regularly serviced.

**6. If you need a car,** buy a small car or a hybrid – keep it well maintained to increase fuel economy.

**7. Try to avoid using your car for short journeys.** Your car emits far more greenhouse gases in the first few minutes it takes to warm up than it does while running. Walk or ride a bike instead for those short journeys and enjoy the added benefits to your health.

**8. Use air conditioning sparingly** – running the air-con continuously while driving around town will increase fuel consumption by up to 10%.



**Jeffrey Paparoa Holman, Poet, Senior Adjunct Fellow**

*“Free personal trainer with every cycle purchased – you. Fight middle age, heart disease, pollution, save the planet with your pedals – live long and prosper”.*

**9. Speed up slowly and stick to the speed limit.** This alone can save you up to 30% on fuel costs.

**10. Change your air filter and tune up your car.** This can save you 10–20% in fuel costs.

**11. Keep tyres correctly inflated and check wheel alignment.** Underinflated tyres can increase your fuel consumption by up to 20%.

**12. Remove roof racks, close windows and sunroofs** when travelling at open-road speeds and remove unnecessary luggage.

**13. If there are new people in your department, talk to them about cycling or busing.** When people start a new job or move house they are more likely to create new habits.

**14. Do you really need to fly to that conference?**



Puncture repair kits, available from Security



Cycling gear



Recycled bottle for combating dehydration



Useful info for cyclists, available from the Sustainability Office



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<sup>1</sup> (2013) New Zealand Household Travel Survey 2009-2012



# paper



Forests are the lungs of our earth. So why would we want to waste paper made from ever-dwindling rainforests, from unsustainably harvested timber? We can use our paper more sensibly, and make sure that what we do use has recycled content or is made from sustainable forest projects.

In 2013, paper formed 31% of office supplies spend at UC. If these reams were placed end-on-end, the horizontal distance covered would be 10.4 km, or the vertical distance would be 198 times the height of the James Hight building at UC!

## Paper

Manja uses recycled content paper for printing, and binds single-sided used paper into new notebooks. Cellulose wrapping for hard copy mail-outs is composted in the Dovedale Community Garden, and the mail-outs themselves are sometimes used to tell key sustainability stories. Posters on her wall are re-used for planning sessions, or for children to draw on.

- 1 Ream of recycled paper for printing
- 2 College newsletter: a great place to place information about upcoming sustainability events
- 3 Recycled paper post-it notes
- 4 Books and notepads made from paper that has been only used once
- 5 Any of these posters when finished with, can be used for planning or for children to draw on
- 6 Cellulose packaging used for wrapping mailouts is ready to be taken to the community garden for composting





# Using paper

**FACT:** One tonne of virgin office paper (400 reams) requires the equivalent of 24 trees to produce!

**FACT:** Each tonne of paper dumped into landfill occupies approximately one cubic metre of increasingly valuable space. There are environmental impacts associated with paper at each stage of its life cycle including:

- Production of raw materials (ie: logging the timber)
- Production of the paper itself (ie: energy and chemicals used in the processing and the waste produced)
- Disposal (ie: greenhouse gas production from paper sitting in landfills, loss of biodiversity to create landfills)

**MYTH:** That the process of recycling paper is more polluting than creating virgin paper. See [www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/materials/paper/basics/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/materials/paper/basics/index.htm) for more information about the benefits of paper recycling.

**FACT:** Paper and cardboard recycled by UC goes mainly to Indonesia and China, but can be purchased by other recyclers from many other parts of the world.

**FACT:** It's best to use less paper. Sometimes this has been contested, but not by us.

## What you can do

- 1. Print duplex or booklet duplex** to save paper – always print double sided. For meeting notes, you can even print 4 pages per sheet! If you don't know how to do this, log a request with ICT for instructions on how to do these things.
- 2. Resize page layouts, line spacing and font sizes** to maximise words per page.
- 3. Think before you print** – do you REALLY need to print that email or draft?
- 4. Try to file electronically as much as possible:** file your emails electronically instead of printing them out.
- 5. Adjust the text size on your browser** – this will help you to read documents online more easily. Use the 'zoom' function in the 'view' menu in your browser to do this.
- 6. Collect and reuse paper that's printed on one side for notes.** Make your own note pads! CEPS offer a free service

making note pads from your supplied recycled paper. For more information email [ceps@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:ceps@canterbury.ac.nz)

**7. Check your print properties:** are they set up how you want them?

**8. Undertake an office assessment of paper use** – this will help to identify how much paper your office uses and where you can save. This is included in the UC Eco-Office Sustainability Assessment, downloadable from the sustain website at [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/).

## What your department can do

- 1. Circulate one copy of memos or reports** rather than printing off one for each staff member.
- 2. Default duplex** – ensure that all printers and work stations are set to print duplex as default.
- 3. Purchase copy paper that is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified, or recycled paper.**
- 4. Review office filing and information systems** to ascertain whether data can be stored electronically in some cases.
- 5. Ensure that recycling bins are accessible** – ensure staff have ready access to, and know the location of the recycling bins, and *use them*.
- 6. Electronic equipment for meetings such as data projectors and laptops can negate the need to print minutes and agendas.** This is an especially useful tool where this equipment is already in use for the meeting – and saves a lot of paper. The meeting minutes can be taken down at the same time!
- 7. Only purchase one subscription of any magazine for your department, and circulate it.** Multiple copies of the same document create a lot of unnecessary waste.



**Manja Pieters, Student Advisor, College of Education**

*"I collect up scrap paper from the MFD and bind it into writing paper pads. It's easy, they're fine, and it means we're not wasting as much paper. But I'm also getting the message out that we need to print less stuff."*

If you notice this happening, see if you can cancel the multiple subscriptions. If the publication can be received electronically, opt for that instead of hardcopy.

**8. In some situations dual screens may help.** Some staff print out emails so they can read them while working in an other programme. Check to see if dual screens would help reduce paper waste.

**9. Visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/paper.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/paper.shtml)** for more information about paper reduction projects at UC.

**10. Investigate if other office paper items** such post-it notes or notebooks are made out of recycled paper.



Paper scraps from MFD bound into writing paper pads



Chopped up re-used paper for notes



Recycled copy paper



# reduce, reuse, r



In nature there is no such thing as waste. Imagine a forest, where growth and decay involve the cycling of energy and nutrients in a robust system. Waste is material that we produce at a rate faster than it can be absorbed by the earth. Let's use less of some resources, and get more out of them by using our recycling systems better.

## Overlooking the treetops outside Registry, this office is a haven of eco office activity.

Juliet and Anita have set up a Freecycle system for their building, putting old stationery to new use. They are also careful to use the University's waste and recycling systems properly – they even take their food scraps to the Okeover Community Garden for composting! In her breaks, Juliet crochets old clothes into new ones, while Anita convinces colleagues to join their eco office initiatives.

- 1 Unneeded office supplies prepared for freecycling
- 2 Using crockery cups instead of getting takeaway cups
- 3 Water kept in reusable flasks rather than bought bottled water
- 4 Banana skin kept out to be put into organics collection, or walked over to the community gardens
- 5 Rubbish bin for waste to landfill used only for landfill, and emptied by Anita rather than by a cleaner
- 6 Recycled artworks used on the walls
- 7 Opshopped clothes
- 8 Crocheting new clothes out of old clothes



# recycle



## Waste

**FACT:** The University of Canterbury sent 256 tonnes of waste to landfill and 521 tonnes to recycling in 2013.

**MYTH:** Recycling, and the transportation involved, uses so much energy that it's actually worse to recycle than not.

**FACT:** Most of our recycled materials are shipped off-shore.

### What you should know

**1. Every desk should have a paper recycling tray.** All paper types can be recycled through this system. These are emptied by cleaning staff. If you don't have a paper recycling tray, contact Cleaning Services (x 6481).

**2. Cardboard is recycled** – Please flatten all boxes, remove any inside packaging (e.g. polystyrene), and leave the cardboard beside the nearest paper recycling wheelie bin or rubbish bin, or beside four-bin stacks for offices which have them. Cleaning staff will remove any flattened cardboard and keep it separated for recycling. In outdoor bin stations, small amounts of cardboard can be placed in the paper recycling bin.

**3. Toner cartridges can be recycled.** All toner cartridges from photocopiers, printers (including laser, and inkjet), and fax machines can be reused or recycled. Simply put them in one of the Ricoh toner cartridge collection boxes (any brand accepted, not just Ricoh). Your department's collection box is usually in the resource room and/or computer technician area.

**4. Avoid, reduce, reuse and then recycle.** Recycling is important, but avoiding the use of a product in favour of one that has a lower environmental impact is better. Where you can, avoid buying a product you don't need, then reduce, reuse or recycle.

**5. Contents of the two litre desktop rubbish containers must be sorted by office users into the larger stacker bins.** If your bin is emptied by a cleaner, please let the Sustainability Projects Coordinator know.

**6. The University has an e-waste collection.** If you have any e-waste, contact ICTS to have it assessed.

**7. Bulldog clips should not go into the document destruct facility.**

**8. You can take your own coffee cup to the cafes to be filled.**

**9. There is no on-site composting facility at UC,** except for the small bins in the community gardens. Our organics is composted off site by Living Earth.

### What you can do

**1. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle paper!** Paper comprises over half of our waste, so by reducing, reusing and recycling paper products, we can significantly reduce our waste to landfill! And ... it's easy to do. Go to [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/recycle.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/recycle.shtml) for more information.

**2. Reduce packaging** – buy products with reduced or no packaging.

**3. Only request stationery when you actually need it,** rather than ordering bulk amounts in advance.

**4. Go to [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/index.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/index.shtml) for more ideas** on how you can help to reduce office waste.

**5. Refill your toner cartridges** – don't throw away your old cartridges, have them refilled. Let those responsible for purchasing know about the service provided by our Preferred Suppliers.

**6. Replacement bins are available** from Cleaning Services (x 6481).

**7. Find alternatives to cling film for your lunches.** What about using a reusable container instead? Or check out [www.4myearth.co.nz/index.php](http://www.4myearth.co.nz/index.php) for some ideas for eco-friendly reusable food wrappers

**8. Avoid buying single-use coffee cups and water bottles.** Use a re-usable cup or drinking bottle instead!



**Anita Kerr and Juliet Hamill**  
Information and Records Advisors  
Information and Records Management

*"We were coming across lots of old stationery some of which was unusable. We worked out how to recycle the unusable stuff and redistributed to staff and students the remaining items. We found this to be popular, environmentally friendly and money saving."*

### What your department can do

**1. Provide re-useable cutlery and crockery for staff** – paper cups, plastic spoons, popsicle sticks and individually packaged sugar, milk and coffee sachets should be replaced by re-useable items to avoid unnecessary waste.

**2. Create a 'free table/area' where re-usable items can be placed.** Some departments have these already and report that they've been working very well. Perhaps you could join in with another department's 'free area'. Students love to take recycled items away and re-purpose them! Visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/Freetables.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/waste/Freetables.shtml) for more information.



Set up a freecycling system in your office



Organics collected for composting in the Okeover Community Garden



Durable drinking vessels



Cool crafts made from unused clothes



# water



We all know that water is precious. It's the source of life on this blue planet. In our offices we have the choice to use water more carefully, or to pollute it and use it wastefully.

## In this tea-nook, Leigh has developed many eco features.

Water left over from meetings is used to water office plants, and most dishes are washed in an energy efficient dishwasher, rather than by individuals one cup at a time. A simple velcroed sign on the dishwasher lets people know whether the dishes are dirty or have been cleaned. Where dishes are washed by hand, a phosphate-free detergent is used.

You'll also see that Leigh uses fair trade tea and coffee, and that tea bags and coffee grounds go into the organics collection. A prominent sign reminds others to do the same.

- 1 sign letting people know that teabags go in the organics bin
- 2 eco-friendly detergent
- 3 using left-over water from a meeting for potplants
- 4 leaky tap fixed
- 5 Fair Trade tea and coffee
- 6 notice on dishwasher to let people know if the contents are dirty or clean
- 7 energy star rated dishwasher
- 8 napkin dispenser with recycled paper napkins
- 9 bin stacks well maintained





## Using water

**FACT:** Water covers 2/3 of the Earth's surface. However only 2.5 per cent of the water on Earth is fresh and most of that is in the polar ice caps. This means that we depend upon just 0.075 per cent of the Earth's total water!

**FACT:** Reducing water usage conserves energy – both through heating of water, and the energy used to pump water around Christchurch.

**FACT:** In 2012 UC used 392,000,000 litres of water on the Ilam Campus. That's the equivalent of 156 Olympic sized swimming pools.

**MYTH:** We have an endless supply of water.

**FACT:** Christchurch sits on at least four large aquifers, but the City Council is already investigating whether additional drinking water should be taken from the Waimakiriri River or Lake Ellesmere.<sup>1</sup>

**MYTH:** The UC boiler is heating the water anyway, so we might as well use it.

**FACT:** Our 'hot water' is heated by electricity. Only our radiators are heated by the boiler.

**FACT:** UC has three beautiful water ways flowing through campus, the Avon Stream, and Okeover and Ilam streams. All are tributaries of the Avon-Otakaro River.

### What you can do

**1. Treat water as if it were gold!** Water is not expensive and so we tend to treat it as if it were plentiful. Remember that you may not be paying with your hip pocket for wasteful practices, but the environment is. Costs for water use and disposal are likely to have greater impact on UC in the near future.

**2. Report leaks** – a dripping tap can waste up to, and sometimes more than, four litres of water a day! Report leaking taps, toilets, urinals or pipes by logging a BEIMS request. Go to <http://beims.canterbury.ac.nz/login.asp> to log in. If you are a student or otherwise cannot log a BEIMS request, please report the leak to the departmental administrator. If you notice that nothing has happened, please advise the Sustainability Office: [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/contact.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/contact.shtml)

**3. Dishwashing** – We don't have an endless supply of water. Reduce your water use when washing up, use a plug and don't leave the water running. A tap left running uses approximately 10 litres of water a minute (about a bucket). If you have a dishwasher, wait til it's full before switching on. If you are concerned about stuff drying on to your dishes, consider getting a container where dishes can be left soaking until it's time to do a load.

**4. Use the half flush option** – on dual-flush toilets this uses only 3 litres instead of 6-9 litres for a full flush.

**5. Share your knowledge** about water with fellow office users and/or contact the Sustainability Office for advice and support.



**Leigh Davidson**  
MBA Programme Administrator  
Commerce

*"I did the Eco Office Sustainability Assessment and discovered a leaky tap. I got the facilities people to fix it because we were probably wasting four litres of water per day".*

### What your department can do

**1. Request that your department has water-efficient fixtures and fittings** – have low-flow showers or flow restrictors fitted to your area's kitchenettes and showers when they are due for refit or repair. If your department is getting a re-fit, see what opportunities there are for greywater use. Did you know that toilets in the Biology Building are flushed using rainwater?

**2. Get leaks fixed** – cisterns that leak constantly day and night waste an enormous amount of water! If you notice a constantly running toilet or urinal, please log a BEIMS request. Go to <http://beims.canterbury.ac.nz/login.asp> to log in.

**3. Do the Eco-Office Sustainability Assessment.** Download the audit from the sustainability website and see how your department is doing. Send the results to the Sustainable Projects Coordinator: [katie.nimmo@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:katie.nimmo@canterbury.ac.nz).



Appliances have good energy rating



Sign letting people know if dishes have been cleaned or not



Proactive communications: teabags in the organic bin!



Eco-friendly detergent

<sup>1</sup> <http://resources.ccc.govt.nz/files/WaterSupplyStrategy2009Full.pdf>



# buying green



When we buy things for the office, we are purchasing the earth, its water, its forests, its climate, its stored energy, and we are creating pollution. How important are these things to you, and to the children of our generation?

**The Sustainability Office is a treasure-trove – both on-line and on recycled content hardcopy – of information on being sustainable.**

Buying new stationery is kept to a minimum, but what there is always has sustainability credentials. Furniture is all re-used, even down to the rug. Food is often made at home, or grown in the community garden, and teas, coffees and sugar are always organic and fair trade.

- 1 Fair Trade coffee and Fair Trade sugar
- 2 Home made cake
- 3 The organic carrots used in the cake
- 4 Diary made of handmade paper
- 5 Flax kete for holding paper pencils
- 6 Crockery mug, never disposable
- 7 Report on UC's waste:  
[www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/research/catalogue.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/research/catalogue.shtml)
- 8 UC Sustainability Advocate
- 9 Buy-local guru





# Buying green

## What is Buying Green?

Green purchasing is the purchase of products and services that have a minimal or reduced environment and human health impact. In addition to improved environmental performance, many environmentally preferred products work as well or better than traditional products and can even save you money.

At UC, we're encouraging departmental purchasers to BUY LESS as a first step, rather than necessarily switching to the eco-option. We don't need as much stuff as we're currently using. Can you see opportunities to save on material use in your sphere of influence?

## Why buy Green?

Environmental impacts occur at all stages of a product's life cycle, from extraction of raw materials to their transportation, manufacture, use and disposal or reuse. Buying 'Green' products helps to reduce the environmental impacts associated with these stages.

### Some things to consider:

- 1. Do you really need it?** The best way of conserving our natural resources is not to use them in the first place!
- 2. Is it made of recycled material, and can it be recycled?** Buying recycled helps reduce your own environmental impacts as well as encourages suppliers to supply recycled products.
- 3. How was the product manufactured?** Could you buy something that does the same job but that carries less of an environmental impact?
- 4. What are the labour conditions under which this product was manufactured?** Can you rest assured that the people involved in making this product were treated fairly? If you're not sure, try looking on Google for some answers.
- 5. Does it contain harmful chemicals or toxins?** Many office products contain chemicals that are quite toxic and that can leach into our waterways once dumped into landfill.

## What your department can do

- 1. Make a commitment to reducing paper use.** Paper is UC's major office consumable. The first step has to be to use less of it (see pages 10-11).
- 2. Consider buying Earth-friendly stationery** – OfficeMax offers a range of environmentally friendly products through their website. Or check the their hardcopy catalogue for more details. Visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/ordergreen.shtml](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecoffice/ordergreen.shtml) to find out how to use an OfficeMax search filter to identify products that have environmental credentials.
- 3. Consider buying recycled paper.**
- 4. Consider buying Fair Trade products** such as coffee, tea, hot chocolate and sugar. Visit [www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/fairtrade/Howtoorderfairtradeofficemax.html](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/fairtrade/Howtoorderfairtradeofficemax.html) for more details on how to do this, or check the hard copy of the Office Max catalogue.
- 5. Hold 'Fair Trade Fridays'**. Use Fair Trade beverages for a special 'end-of-week' afternoon or morning tea. This will help to raise the profile of Fair Trade in your office kitchen, but also keep any associated costs to a minimum.
- 6. Request recycled or recyclable products from suppliers** – if a supplier does not offer recycled products, request them. This will let them know that their customers see this as being important and encourage them to offer more of these products.



**Matt Morris, Sustainability Advocate**  
**Katie Nimmo, Sustainability Projects Facilitator**

*"We do everything we can to keep our purchasing down, and we often use reused materials. We're particularly hot on food; sometimes we self-cater and we always use reusable plates, cups and cutlery and choose in-season, fair trade and organic wherever we can."*



Ethical coffee



Carrots sourced from our community garden



Reusable shopping bag to assist buying reusable office items



# Participation

Achieving good Eco-Office practices and sustaining them on an ongoing basis requires good levels of participation, consistent communication, and relevant information for new and existing staff. Key practices for the overall certification process include:

## Level One

- Nomination of an Eco Office Champion and working group.
- All members of the group or department are informed about the Eco Office assessment and certification process, have had a chance to discuss it at an all-of-staff departmental meeting, and been invited to contribute to the assessment and certification process.
- All members of the department or group read the Eco Office Guide.<sup>1</sup>
- Completing a UC Eco Office Sustainability Assessment
- Application for certification, with 75% of all full and part time staff signing the application.
- Maintain a designated section of an office bulletin board, or have a separate board for posting tips and information about eco-office practices or sustainability events and groups.
- At least one office member receives the UC Sustainability Office newsletter and circulates relevant information to the rest of staff.
- Proper recycling practices are reviewed at an all-of-staff meeting once a year, and staff are given an opportunity to ask questions about UC's waste system.
- Discussion of sustainable transport options available to staff.

## Level Two

- Ask staff about potential green building features for your building (e.g. lighting retrofits, dual flush toilets, timers on extractor fans, or aerators on sinks), and communicate this feedback to Facilities Management.
- Schedule a 'sustainability moment' discussion into regular staff meetings, similar to a 'health and safety moment.'
- Attend UC Eco Office Network gatherings.

## Level Three

- Induct all new staff members into the Eco Office Programme by
  - Introducing them to Eco Office Certification
  - asking them to read the Eco Office Guide
  - draw their attention to the 'green' section of the office bulletin board.
- If your department/Unit has a Sustainability Working Group, your office is represented on it.

## Level Four

- Inspiring another office group to pursue UC Eco Office certification
- Implementing two additional Green Projects for your office.

<sup>1</sup> An efficient way to get all staff in your department or group to read this guide is to nominate each staff member (or small groups) to read a particular section of the guide, rather than the whole guide, and ask them to report back to the whole group

- a. A key message from the guide
- b. OR Anything new they learnt from reading the guide
- c. OR Any new action not included in the guide
- d. OR Any way the guide could be improved.



# Resources



## Sustainable Living

[www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/sus-dev/25-steps-towards-sustainability/index.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/sus-dev/25-steps-towards-sustainability/index.html)

[www.livinggreener.gov.au](http://www.livinggreener.gov.au)

[www.sustainableliving.org.nz/](http://www.sustainableliving.org.nz/)

## Green Office

[www.greenoffice.org.nz](http://www.greenoffice.org.nz)

## Waste and recycling

[www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste/waste-strategy/index.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste/waste-strategy/index.html)

## Energy conservation

[www.eeca.govt.nz](http://www.eeca.govt.nz)

## CEPS & the environment

[www.ceps.canterbury.ac.nz/environment/index.shtml](http://www.ceps.canterbury.ac.nz/environment/index.shtml)

## Thanks

The Sustainability Office would like to thank the many people who contributed their time and thoughts to the re-creation of this Guide.

Specifically, we'd like to thank:

Barbara Albertson

Leigh Davidson

John-Luke Day

Juliet Hamill

Anita Kerr

Chris Hawker

Sharon McIver

Isabel Milward

Matt Morris

Tom Norcliffe

Caroline Philp

Manja Pieters

Karen Reynolds

Susanne Rose

Tony Sellin

Adrian Teather

Maree Thomas

Helen Tulett

Frances Register

TC Woo

Tessa Wright



