

# Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Sustainability Plan

## 1. Agency Contact Information

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## 2. Sustainability Policy Statement

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Executive Order 02-03 and will strive to model the principles of sustainability in its operations, fleet management, procurement, and building construction.

WDVA recognizes:

- The importance of planning for future generations and setting long-term planning horizons in order to leave future generations a legacy of sustainable resources
- The imperative of changing business practices over time in order to reverse trends of natural system decline that threaten the economic health and social vitality of our state
- That each agency and each individual can make a difference

## 3. Long Range Goals

- Institutionalize sustainability as an agency value
- Raise employee awareness of sustainability in the workplace and in their personal lives
- Minimize energy and water use
- Shift to clean energy for both facilities and vehicles
- Shift to non-toxic, recycled and remanufactured materials in purchasing and construction
- Expand markets for environmentally preferable products and services
- Reduce or eliminate waste as an inefficient or improper use of resources
- Investigate and adopt new methods for sustainable practices as they are developed and become available
- Become a model agency of environmental consciousness coupled with good business practices and outstanding performance

#### **4. Current Practices and Assess Opportunities**

##### **A. Fleets and Transportation**

- Continue to reduce miles traveled through the use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing
- Continue regular vehicle maintenance to maximize mpg
- Replace agency vehicle pool with hybrid vehicles as needed

##### **B. Purchase of Goods and Services**

- Continue, and increase the purchase of recycled and remanufactured, and non-toxic products.
- Contract for services with companies who use recycled, remanufactured and non-toxic chemicals.

##### **C. Facility Construction, Operation and Maintenance**

- Continue to monitor and reduce energy usage including water, electricity and waste management services through composting, recycling and staff education
- Strive for, and obtain LEEDS certification of the new 240-bed nursing facility at Retsil and in future construction projects

##### **D. Grounds Maintenance**

- Continue to be cognizant of water usage
- Reduce chemical usage
- Recycle waste products through composting
- Use recaptured water

##### **E. Health and safety programs**

- Continue to provide health and safety training
- Continue the agency's wellness program with additional emphasis on the environmental impacts

#### **5. Establish Objectives for Biennial Plan**

- WDVA will construct a new 240-bed facility utilizing natural ventilation, environmentally friendly products, recycled materials and achieve LEEDS Silver certification
- WDVA will reduce the use of virgin and chlorine-bleached paper as well as reduce overall consumption
- WDVA will reduce miles traveled and fuel consumption

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

- Executive Sponsor at WDVA is Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos, Assistant Director for Agency Operations.
- Project lead is April Harris, Executive Assistant, with active participation by team members and department heads throughout the agency
- Expertise within the agency will be utilized to ensure the on-going plan is comprehensive and up to date, utilizing the latest in technology and discovery

## **7. Communication and Education**

- Employees will receive informational e-mail
- A link to the agency's internal and external websites will be developed to educate and inform employees, customers and other stakeholders
- Employees will be offered opportunities to view or attend informational seminars or webcasts
- Employees will be trained via conferences, seminars, or webcasts to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities to further incorporate sustainable practices into their job requirements. Example: Procurement training online through Energy Star.
- Employees will be educated on how their personal choices affect the environment

## **8. Performance Measures and Continuous Improvement**

- Baselines will be established in each identified area.
- Measure and monitor progress, submitting updated reports to the Governor's office annually
- Agency will continue to research and network with other agencies and stakeholders to stay abreast of new or improved, methods, products and services that will enhance the continued success of sustainability efforts.
- Sustainability goals will be incorporated in performance contracts, MDPPs and EDPPs