

**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN  
UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2004  
FOR THE WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**Agency Contact**

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**Policy Statement**

The Guiding Principle of Sustainability: Zero waste in all things. Meeting today's needs without compromising the needs of future generations.

*Recognizing that:*

- *The natural resources of our state are scarce and precious;*
- *We have a responsibility to future generations to preserve our environment and natural resources;*
- *Local decisions have regional and global implications;*
- *A healthy environment supports healthy citizens;*
- *Investment in the design phase of any process or product drives sustainable outcomes;*
- *Collaborative relationships and a collaborative approach support sustainable solutions;*

*Millions of tons of toxic chemicals are released into our air, land, and water each year. The health impacts of these exposures can include asthma, birth defects, behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, autism, cancer, impaired immune systems, neurological impairments, reproductive disorders and even death.*

*Adoption of sustainable practices works in concert with the mission of the Department of Health. The Department of Health is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Executive Order 02-03, and will strive in partnership with other state agencies to model the principles of sustainability in all its business. We believe that adopting sustainable practices now as a method of doing business will assist in reversing the decline of our natural resources, and environment while improving our quality of life.*

**Impacts**

The Department of Health Mission Statement: *"The Department of Health works to protect and improve the health of people in Washington State."*

*In accomplishing our mission, we have determined that we:*

- Travel
- Purchase goods and services
- Construct and own facilities
- Lease facilities
- Consume energy and potable water
- Discharge pollutants within EPA standards and generate solid waste into the natural environment.

## **Current Practices**

We found that we are already recycling items such as paper, cardboard, bottles, and aluminum cans. We have equipment that is Energy Star rated. We have conducted energy audits on buildings we own and have upgraded lighting to save energy and reduce costs. We are turning off unnecessary lights and equipment. Some of us participate in commute trip reduction programs. We are purchasing some paper that is unbleached and chlorine free. We use recycled materials in some of the publications we issue. We have eliminated many paper publications by putting them on the Web or issuing them on CD-ROM.

Our Public Health Laboratory:

1. Installed another autoclave to process biohazard waste, thereby reducing the biohazard waste to normal waste, which can be safely dumped in the landfill.
2. Is purchasing paper products, which require less sterilization, thereby saving energy.
3. Plans to change out ballasts in fluorescent lighting fixtures, which will save additional energy and dollars.
4. Reuses Styrofoam packing materials.

DOH has been aggressive in reducing energy consumption in all leased facilities.

Our capital program is using LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building standards for new construction and recycles building construction waste.

DOH, in partnership with GA, is establishing standards for leased space that include LEED elements for any new leased space.

We worked with GA Purchasing to eliminate the purchase of cars containing mercury light bulbs in the trunk and under the hood. We worked with GA Surplus to ensure old vehicles have their mercury trunk/hood light bulbs disposed of properly.

## **The Department of Health's Sustainability Goals – Updated for 2004**

**Goal 1:** Reduce the use of equipment, supplies or other products containing toxic chemicals.

*Strategy: Develop and implement an environmentally preferred purchasing policy that gives preference to the purchase of products that contain the least amount of persistent toxic chemicals.*

*Strategy: New vehicles purchased by the department will be certified as ULEV where possible.*

**Goal 2:** Increase participation in the DOH Commute Trip Reduction Program by 5% each year.

*Strategy: Establish a standard staff incentives package for reducing commute trips.*

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*Strategy: Continue emphasis on employee vanpools, mass transit, carpooling, walking, bicycling, and telecommuting options where type of work allows.*

Outcome: Reduced auto emissions into the environment from reduced usage and improved technology. Reduced consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels. Reduced water and air pollution. Improved quality of life for the community. Improved natural environment.

**Goal 3:** Increase awareness of recycling and solid waste disposal impacts through employee education.

*Strategy: Evaluate buildings for waste system improvement opportunities. Change garbage collection services to materials management systems in which most items are recycled or re-used.*

*Strategy: Re-use or recycle office furnishings and equipment as an alternative to surplus or landfill. Contact GA Plant Operations Support to determine if items can be donated for other public use.*

*Strategy: Add additional recycle receptacles for new types of recyclable items (plastics)*

*Strategy: Use rechargeable batteries to the maximum extent possible.*

*Strategy: Recycle fluorescent bulbs to reduce mercury residues from light bulbs found in the environment. As current building leases expire where such buildings have fluorescent lights, negotiate with landlords to appropriately dispose of burned fluorescent light bulbs.*

*Strategy: Purchase or lease network printers and copiers that print 2-sided copies, and use 2-sided copies wherever possible.*

*Strategy: Use recycled components wherever possible.*

Outcome: Increased recycling and reduced solid waste generation, improving the natural environment. Reduced solid waste dump fees. Cost savings to the taxpayer through reuse of items no longer needed by DOH.

**Goal 4:** All new DOH facilities construction shall be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certified.

*Strategy: Partner with GA to procure only LEED certified space.*

*Strategy: Perform General Administration required energy audit prior to renewal of leases and determine alternate low energy solutions for lightning, heating, and water consumption.*

Outcome: Energy will be saved that can be used for another purpose. Sustainable practices will become standard in DOH facilities.

## **Statewide Performance Measures**

- A. Copy paper use by quantity and paper type.
- B. Vehicle miles traveled by agency fleet vehicles as well as personal vehicles used for business.
- C. Fuel purchases by gallons and type of fuel.

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D. Agency fuel efficiency of vehicles in agency fleet.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Agency management staff shall be responsible for reaching sustainability goals.

## **Communication and Education**

Communication: DOH management chose to create a sustainability task force consisting of agency management staff to develop and implement this plan. Managers engaged employees in the plan through gathering employee input during management/employee meetings.

Education: Further education of DOH employees will be accomplished under several of the goals contained in this plan.

## **Performance**

Performance for each of the above goals will be measured by completing assessments and developing baseline measurements for each of the goals. Current DOH data will be used to complete the assessments and develop baseline measurements.

The DOH agency contact and administrator of this plan will be the Director of Properties Management.

The Department of Health Sustainability Plan, in accordance with Executive Order 02-03 has been adopted this day

\_\_\_\_\_, 2004

By

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Mary Selecky, Secretary, Department of Health