



GREEN GUIDE

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO
SUSTAINABLE LIVING



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Office of Sustainability

Sustainability @ VCU

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability is the goal of maintaining a good quality of life for those who presently experience it, while expanding the quality of life to those who lack it; and understanding and respecting the needs of future generations and the limits of natural systems within which quality human lives are necessarily embedded and dependent.

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Sustainability at VCU intends to be mindful stewards of our diverse human and natural environments through education, innovation, collaboration and engagement. We strive to foster a multi-faceted culture of sustainability, through the responsible use of resources and continuous advocacy for the Richmond community by inspiring behavior change through our own efforts.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

In an effort to create a more sustainable campus community, the Office of Sustainability, with the assistance of the Sustainability Committee, drafted and published VCU's first Sustainability Plan in 2015.

The plan is organized into four sections, based on the four subcommittees, and seeks to provide a more holistic vision of sustainability at VCU.



VCU SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Virginia Commonwealth University has been working toward a more sustainable campus and community since 2008. There has been a growing emphasis on expanding the focus of campus sustainability beyond operations and facilities to include other important attributes of the university such as academics, administration and community engagement.

This inspired the creation of VCU's Sustainability Plan, a living document that will serve as a road map to implementing sustainability across the university.

Below are some selected goals from each of the four sections of the plan. Read the full plan at sustainability.vcu.edu.

Academics & Research

- ⇒ Promote sustainability literacy through experiential learning.
- ⇒ Further infuse sustainability into academics.

Community Engagement

- ⇒ Provide resources to better engage the VCU community around sustainability.

Operations

- ⇒ Reduce energy and water usage and waste produced on campus.
- ⇒ Reduce faculty, staff, and student single-occupancy vehicle usage.

Planning & Administration

- ⇒ Promote wellness for the VCU community through activities.
- ⇒ Increase engagement with VCU Learning Gardens.

Learning Gardens

OUR MISSION

MPC LEARNING GARDEN

Food insecurity is a significant issue both on and off campus. Our Learning Garden, located at 1218 Parkwood Ave, is dedicated to growing and donating as much fresh produce as possible to people in our community with insufficient access to healthy food. Our goals also include creating a universally designed and fully accessible space, reclaiming as many materials as possible, providing education through hands-on gardening experiences, building strong partnerships within our community, and providing resources for those looking to start their own garden and live healthier lifestyles.

RAMPANTRY

About half of the produce grown in our garden goes to RAMpantry, an on-campus student food pantry located in the Student Commons. RAMpantry provides garden-fresh produce, canned goods and household staples to students experiencing food insecurity. For more information, visit vcustudentfoodpantry.com.

FUTURE PLANS & GETTING INVOLVED

Our garden kicked off its first growing season in the spring of 2016 and we have had a remarkably productive year! Next year, we hope to start ADA accessible bed construction, gathering/storage space construction, rain barrel installation, cold frame building and installation, and a solitary bee hotel.

There are plenty of ways to join in the fun, including helping with harvesting, planting, weeding and watering. Check out our facebook page and website for more information on upcoming volunteer opportunities, events and workshops.

facebook.com/VCULearningGardens
learninggarden@vcu.edu

MAKE YOUR GARDEN GROW!

MCV COMMUNITY GARDEN

You can cultivate your gardening skills right on campus by renting a plot at the MCV community garden, located behind Larrick Student Center at 900 Turpin Street. Plots can be rented in all different sizes for either a semester or an entire year. Catch the campus connector to Larrick to visit the garden.

TIPS FOR BEGINNING URBAN GARDENERS

+ Be creative! Make your garden uniquely yours by reclaiming materials for planters and containers. We gave new life to pallets, burlap coffee bags and discarded pots from local nurseries.

+ Work with your space. You can garden just about anywhere, as long as you get a decent amount of sunlight. You can use windowsills, vertical space and containers to make a beautiful garden in close quarters.

+ Grow what you like to eat. Gardening will be most satisfying if you focus (at least at first) on growing the things you're going to be the most excited to eat.

COOKING TIP

Eat with the seasons! If it **grows** together, it **goes** together. Veggies tend to complement each other if they grow in the same season, like tomatoes and basil, or carrots and beets.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TRICYCLE GARDENS

Tricycle Gardens offers tours, volunteer opportunities and runs several community gardens throughout Richmond. They sell plants and produce on MCV's campus at the corner of College & Marshall Street the first three Thursdays of every month from 10am-1pm (SNAP benefits accepted).

LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDENS

Richmond's highly regarded botanical garden offers lots of classes, events, and volunteer opportunities, and holds an amazing annual plant sale.

SNEED'S NURSERY

An amazing local, organic nursery that provides high quality plant starts, along with free weekend workshops ranging from beekeeping to herbal medicine to moon gardening!



Reduce & Reuse

REDUCING ENERGY USE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

To reduce your environmental impact, it is important to reuse products as much as possible, as well as reduce the amount we purchase in the first place. Richmond has a great variety of second-hand stores for you to shop at, and donation drop-off sites for you to bring any gently used items that you may not want anymore.

DONATION LOCATIONS

Donate or sell your gently used items at these locations.

THRIFT:

FANTASTIC THRIFT

THE FAN
1914 West Main Street
804. 358. 7164

THE CLOTHES RACK

CARYTOWN
2618 West Cary Street
804. 358. 4693

DIVERSITY THRIFT

SCOTT'S ADDITION
1407 Sherwood Avenue
804. 353. 8890

SECOND DEBUT BY GOODWILL

CARYTOWN
3114 West Cary Street
804. 254. 7623

CONSIGNMENT:

RUMORS

MONROE PARK
723 West Broad Street
804. 644. 2020

ASHBY

CARYTOWN
3010 West Cary Street
804. 377. 3010

GREEN TIP

There are lots of ways to keep your food local and green. The Bird-House Market offers a local produce box to VCU students for only \$10 with a VCU ID. The market is open every Tuesday, 3pm to 6:30pm, from May through November. It is located behind Randolph Community Center, at 1507 Grayland Avenue.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING TIPS

- + Turn off the lights when leaving your home or office.
- + Replace your incandescent bulbs with LEDs, which use 70-90% less electricity and last 50x longer.
- + Set your thermostat to the recommended temperatures of 68 degrees in the winter and 74 degrees in the summer.
- + Unplug anything that isn't in use, especially if you will be gone for an extended period of time!
- + Enable your computer's sleep mode.
- + Exercise by avoiding the elevator and taking the stairs, your heart will love you!
- + Buy fresh, buy local. Support Virginia farmers and small businesses by purchasing your groceries at farmer's markets and locally-owned stores.
- + Rather than purchasing single-use items (e.g. disposable razors, paper plates) invest in durable and reusable products.

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

- + Do not leave the faucet running while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- + When doing dishes, fill the sink rather than keep water running.
- + Take shorter showers to save water and save energy.
- + Report any leaky faucets or toilets to your RA or landlords. A tap leaking one drop of water per second wastes more than 25L of water a day! That's 9,000L a year!
- + Wash clothes in the cold water cycle and only run full loads.





RECYCLING ON CAMPUS

Single stream recycling refers to a system in which all paper fibers, plastics, metals, and other recyclables are mixed in a collection bin. Please make a conscientious effort to use the recycling bins provided throughout the campus to divert salvageable materials from overwhelming our landfills.

RECYCLING OFF CAMPUS

For information on recycling off-campus at your home:

RESIDENTIAL PICK-UPS

Central Virginia Waste Management (CVWMA) offers curbside pick-up
cvwma.com

ELECTRONIC WASTE

Cell phones and laptops can be dropped off with the VCU Police at 938 West Grace Street, with proceeds going to help victims of domestic violence. Laptops may also be traded in for credit toward a new laptop at RamTech. Visit ramtech.vcu.edu for details.

MOVING TIP

During move out, residence halls have Goodwill bins located in lobbies for electronics, clothing, and household goods.

Don't toss it, donate it!

WHAT GOES IN WHAT BIN?

Sometimes when we're in a rush it can be confusing to pick the correct bin for trash or recycling. Here is a handy guide:

RECYCLING BIN



ORGANIC & LANDFILL WASTE BIN



Transportation

TIPS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

ON CAMPUS

WALK + BIKE

Explore your surroundings and get exercise. Richmond has tons of local eateries, shops, and parks in walking and biking distance of campus, as well as a warm and friendly atmosphere.

RAMRIDE - CAMPUS CONNECTOR

RamRide is comprised of two routes that provide free transportation on and between the campuses for VCU students, faculty, and staff. Download the VCU Transloc App to track buses in real time!

AROUND RICHMOND

GRTC - BUS

VCU offers discounted GRTC transit passes to all VCU students. With this pass, you have easy access to convenient transportation around the Richmond area.

ZIMRIDE - CARPOOL

Zimride is VCU's private social network for ride sharing. Students can split the costs of driving their vehicle by sharing their rides with fellow VCU students. Zimride can be used to find rides for commutes, popular events, or for long trips outside the Richmond area. Learn more at zimride.vcu.edu.

For more information on these and other transportation options offered at VCU, call Parking and Transportation at (804) 828-PARK or visit parking.vcu.edu.

BIKING TIP

VCU Police provide free U-locks and bike registration to help prevent bike theft. For more info visit police.vcu.edu or head over to 938 West Grace Street.

BIKING ON CAMPUS

RAMBIKES

RamBikes is your campus resource guide for biking safely and enjoyably at VCU. Located at 201 North Belvidere Street, RamBikes is dedicated to promoting bicycling as a safe, fun, economical, efficient and environmentally friendly transportation alternative for the VCU campus community.

RamBikes staff can assist in repairing your bike or teach you to make your own repairs. Students may have to provide their own replacement parts if necessary. For more information about these services, contact VCU RamBikes at bikes.vcu.edu or at (804) 828-BIKE.

BIKE RENTAL PROGRAM

In an effort to reduce congestion and pollution associated with automobile use, students can rent bikes at no cost for short trips. Locations include both campus libraries: Cabell on the Monroe Park campus and Thompkins-McCaw on the MCV campus. The check out process is similar to checking out a library book and a valid VCU ID is required. Bike check outs include a helmet, a key for the lock, and up to 48 hours of use. Ask about the bike loan program at library info desks.

LOCAL BIKE SHOP LOCATIONS

BALANCE BICYCLE SHOP
MONROE PARK CAMPUS
904 West Broad Street
804. 918. 1175

LUCKY'S BICYCLES
THE FAN
708 North Meadow Street
804. 781. 7777

CYCLUS BIKE SHOP
CHURCH HILL
2225 East Clay Street
804. 644. 0860

BUNNY HOP BIKE SHOP
OREGON HILL
349 South Laurel Street
804. 248. 5878

CARYTOWN BICYCLE CO.
CARYTOWN
3112 West Cary Street
804. 440. 2453

RICHMOND RE-CYCLES
THE FAN
2621 West Cary Street
804. 355. 0166

Action & Involvement

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

VCU OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM

VCU OAP offers rental equipment and various trips that explore different parts of Richmond and the surrounding area through canoeing, hang-gliding, hiking, kayaking, rafting, and climbing. They offer training and instruction for beginners and people wanting to advance. Their wide variety of affordable outdoor equipment can also assist you in taking a trip of your own! VCU OAP rents mountain bikes, road bikes, and hosts regular rides and bike trips. Check out their website or give them a call to find out where their next adventure will be!

804. 828. 6004
outdoors@vcu.edu
recsports.vcu.edu/outdoor_adventure

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

HANDS ON GREATER RICHMOND VOLUNTEERING

Find volunteer opportunities at the Hands on Greater Richmond website. There are many opportunities related to the environment and sustainability. You can also search by areas of interest, distance, or dates. Better our community by putting your skills to work!

handsonrva.org

Visit the Student Leadership & Involvement Center in the Commons for on campus opportunities!



STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

GREEN UNITY

Green Unity focuses on making VCU and the greater community more sustainable through service and education. Green Unity promotes cooperation and teamwork among students, faculty and staff from all different schools within the university, as each have unique skills and expertise to share. Green Unity works with local organizations and businesses to promote sustainability, conservation and an overall more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Join the [Green Unity at VCU](#) group on Facebook for more information!

ECO FASHION

EcoFashion's mission is to inspire VCU students to pair their love of fashion with their concern for the world in which we live. They strive to educate and facilitate greener practices concerning fashion in students' day-to-day lives both on and off campus. EcoFashion works with other student organizations and the VCU Office of Sustainability to promote environmental consciousness in new and exciting ways. Members include fashion designers, fashion merchandisers, and students of all other majors who love fashion or would like to be more sustainable with their apparel choices.

Like [Eco Fashion Club at VCU](#) on Facebook for more information or follow on Instagram [@ecofashionvcu](#).

VA STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION (VSEC)

The VA Student Environmental Coalition (VSEC) is a student organization comprised of members from across Virginia that is dedicated to opposing environmentally destructive initiatives, holding our social institutions accountable, and empowering communities. VSEC engages in a variety of methods to advocate for environmental justice which includes: forming rallies and marches, lobbying our representatives, opposing new fossil fuel infrastructure, and promoting fossil fuel divestment on campuses, among other things.

You can find out more about VSEC by visiting vsecoalition.org.

Contacts & Resources

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STAY CONNECTED!

 [@vcusustain](https://twitter.com/vcusustain)

 [instagram.com/vcusustainability](https://www.instagram.com/vcusustainability)

 vcusustainability.tumblr.com

 [facebook.com/vcusustainability](https://www.facebook.com/vcusustainability)

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