

Isla Vista Tenants Union (A.S. Green Bill)

Sustainability & Climate Action Plan

Overview

During Winter 2014, the Isla Vista Tenants Union (IVTU) was assessed through the PACES (Program for the Assessment and Certification for the Environment and Sustainability) Program. This plan illustrates the findings from the assessment and also includes recommendations for future action.

Transportation and Sustainable Sites

With about 8 student employees and a full time caseworker, IVTU naturally has an advantage in the transportation segment of our review. More than half of the IVTU members bike, walk, or skateboard to work, given the close proximity of IVTU to student apartment and dorms. However, if commute by car is required, PACES recommends looking into carpooling.

As part of the Smart Ride program, Traffic Solutions is recommending the [Carma App](#), a smart phone application designed to provide Real-Time Ridesharing in Santa Barbara County. Carma offers real-time carpooling, and will match users with one another to share rides and split the cost of gas to work. Carma is being used in several cities in the US and abroad. The App is available for [Android](#) and [iPhone](#) and can also be accessed through an Internet browser.

Energy

Lighting

During the walkthrough, PACES recognized the use of natural lighting in the main office space. While IVTU utilized natural lighting in their main office area, the window size simply does not allow for much light to illuminate the office; therefore, PACES recommends utilizing energy efficient fluorescent or LED light fixtures for the overhead lights if not already implemented.

LED task lamps are also a great way to adjust the lighting for work. The IVTU has some LED push-button task lamps, but they are out of batteries. PACES recommends purchasing rechargeable alkaline batteries for the task lamps if possible. PACES noticed that the kitchen has a large window that was covered by blinds. IVTU could save energy by turning off the overhead lights in the kitchen and utilize natural lighting by opening the blinds, or perhaps de-lamping some overhead lights in the kitchen. De-lamping is the process of removing some of the bulbs from the housing. In the caseworker's office, natural lighting could be the primary source of light if the blinds were opened during the daytime. In the office with no windows by the bathrooms, a stand light with fluorescent or LED lightbulbs and frequent utilization of task lamps instead of the overhead lights will definitely reduce energy usage. Lastly, light switch reminders can easily be placed next to light switches as a reminder to turn off the lights when leaving a room for all employees. PACES can provide these light switch reminders.

Power Monitoring

IVTU generally puts appliances, equipment, and IT on sleep mode after work hours. Although sleep mode is the quickest way to jump start technological equipment and use less energy than screensavers, sleep mode can still sap a bit of energy through accumulation. PACES recommends completely turning off equipment at the end of the day to further minimize energy use, installing power strips to easily turn off multiple pieces of equipment at once. PACES noticed that there was a space heater in the caseworker's office; hopefully when Facilities fixes the central heating system, the space heater could be retired as space heaters consume more energy than centralized heating systems.

Purchasing

Food

IVTU supports not only local restaurants and businesses when purchasing food for catering, but also A.S. Green Bill recommended stores to purchase groceries. In the kitchen, PACES discovered the ample use of compostable plates, napkins, and utensils. Compostable goods and reusable silverware and dishware will greatly reduce the environmental impact of Styrofoam cups. PACES also learned that IVTU hosts free meals at the IV Food Co-Op every Wednesday. We are thrilled about how IVTU is giving back to the community. This opportunity could be a very good incentive to attract attention to IVTU as well as attention to sustainable food options.

Energy Star

ENERGY STAR is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) voluntary program that helps businesses and individuals save money and protect our climate through superior energy efficiency. Energy Star certified appliances reduce the cost of energy when compared to non-Energy Star certified appliances. When purchasing new computers, fridges, printers, etc. check to see if there is a sticker that says "Energy Star Certified." The sticker implies that the appliance that you are buying is energy efficient and will save money in the long run, compared to non-certified appliances. IVTU also inquired about finding a suitable energy star certified replacement for their current printer. Through Gateway, PACES recommends Epson - WorkForce WF-3540 Printer - 500 Sheets, 17.7" x 16.8" x 12.1", 15 ppm (Black); 9.3 ppm (Color). This printer is not only one of the cheapest printers available, but it is also Energy Star certified.

Office Supplies

During the walkthrough, PACES discovered that the IVTU utilizes 30% post-consumer recycled paper for printing as well as environmentally-preferable (non-toxic) markers for their white boards. PACES recommends buying more office materials with recycled content, like post-its and pens, and shifting to 50% recycled printing paper. Furthermore, office technology such as printers and paper shredders are centralized, which helps reduce the energy impacts from having personal printers. Additionally, IVTU prints double-sided whenever possible. IVTU also purchases environmentally preferable dish soap detergents, something that PACES definitely recommends. Additionally, if IVTU would like free green cleaning sprays, feel free to contact PACES, as we may be able to provide one for you.

Recycling / Waste

Recycling bins are somewhat evenly distributed throughout the office spaces, something that could be improved upon. More recycling bins allows building occupants to recycle whenever needed; moreover, PACES recommends placing a recycling bin in each office space, or a blue bin attachment to trash cans for lesser loads. PACES also recommends placing signage around the office spaces reminding people to recycle and what materials can be recycled. PACES noticed that A.S. Sustainability signage is posted in the restrooms, something that is greatly welcomed. Additionally, IVTU could also consider starting a scrap paper pile.

With regards to composting, when PACES interviewed IVTU, IVTU was in the process of setting up a composting program with Sarah from A.S. Recycling. If IVTU would like more information regarding composting programs please contact one of our team members.

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PACES Assessment Checklist

- Limit overhead lights and use task lights/natural lighting as the primary light source whenever possible
- Post turn off the light signs and reminders to turn off other equipment at night. PACES can provide this
- Use energy-saving fluorescent or LED light bulbs for overhead lights
- Instead of using overhead lighting in the kitchen, open the blinds to let natural light in
- Invest in power strips and/or turn off electric equipment at the end of the day
- Purchase an Energy Star certified printer: ex.) Epson - WorkForce WF-3540 Printer - 500 Sheets, 17.7" x 16.8" x 12.1", 15 ppm (Black); 9.3 ppm (Color) from Gateway
- Purchase 50% recycled printer paper, and more office supplies with recycled content
- Place a recycling bin in each office, or a blue bin attachment to a trashcan
- Place recycling reminders around the office spaces, which can be provided by PACES
- Consider starting a scrap paper pile
- Contact Facilities about fixing the heating/ventilation system and phase out space heaters
- Set up a composting plan with Sarah from A.S
- Increase awareness of how to call-in leaks