

Cleveland State  
University

# GREEN OFFICE GUIDE



# ABOUT

The CSU Green Office Guide was developed by the Office of Sustainability to be a resource for faculty, staff and students working on campus. The tips offered in the guide are meant to support CSU's ongoing efforts to minimize energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and cut costs associated with utilities and waste management. By applying the practices mentioned in this guide, everyone can contribute to sustainable campus operations. **Thanks for your interest in greening your office environment!**

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## ENERGY

Reducing energy consumption in the office limits harmful greenhouse gas emissions and saves money. Thoughtful use of office equipment, lights and thermostats can significantly reduce consumption of electricity, steam (for heating) and chilled water (for cooling).

### OFFICE EQUIPMENT

- ➔ Unplug chargers from wall outlets when equipment is fully charged or when the chargers are not connected to any equipment.
- ➔ Switch off display screens in common areas and lobbies at the end of the day.
- ➔ Set a timer or designate a person to switch off coffee makers at the end of the day.
- ➔ Avoid personal space heaters unless provided by Facilities.
- ➔ Avoid personal refrigerators and use common lunchroom refrigerators where available.
- ➔ Taking the stairs instead of the elevator is not only a way to save energy but is better for your physical health.

### PRINTING AND COPYING EQUIPMENT

Cleveland State utilizes a [Managed Print Services](#) program which offers multi-function printing/copying devices across campus. This program has been effective at saving energy and reducing waste, but there are ways you can contribute as well.

- ➔ Avoid personal printers and copiers.
- ➔ When printing multiple pages, always print double sided.
- ➔ Digitally archive files and documents whenever possible.
- ➔ Print in grayscale when appropriate to avoid the higher printing fee associated with each color copy.

## COMPUTERS

- ➔ Purchase computers that are ENERGY STAR certified. By using the most efficient components and better managing energy use when idle, these will use 25–40% less energy than conventional models.
- ➔ Select a laptop over a desktop computer when possible. Laptops are 2.5 to 3 times more efficient than desktop computers.
- ➔ Switch off the monitor when stepping away from your computer for 10 minutes or more. Avoid screensavers.
- ➔ Enable [Power Management](#) to place computers and monitors into a low-power sleep mode after 15 minutes of inactivity.
- ➔ Plugging your computer and all of its supporting equipment into a power strip allows you to easily switch off multiple devices and eliminate standby consumption of electricity. For electrical safety, ensure that power strips are UL certified.
- ➔ Power down by turning off computers, monitors, printers and speakers for weekends and holidays. Remind your colleagues to do the same by sharing the [CSU Holiday Energy Saving Checklist](#).

## WINDOWS

- ➔ Keep windows closed in air-conditioned buildings. Open windows allow for conditioned air to escape and unconditioned outdoor air to enter. This in turn forces air conditioning units to work harder to maintain the desired air temperature which uses more electricity.
- ➔ Keep your office cooler on hot summer days by closing the blinds.
- ➔ Open blinds when in direct sunlight to provide extra warmth and natural light.
- ➔ When leaving the office for weekends and holiday breaks, make sure the windows are shut tight.

## LIGHTS

- CSU has an ongoing program to upgrade campus lighting to energy efficient LEDs. Here are some ways you can help to save energy and electricity costs associated with lighting:
- ➔ Switch off the lights when leaving your office. **Request a Switch Off sticker from the Office of Sustainability** as a reminder.
  - ➔ Whenever possible, utilize natural lighting.
  - ➔ Keep lights off in classrooms that are not in use.
  - ➔ Consider utilizing task lighting in place of overhead lights.

## THERMOSTAT

### DID YOU KNOW?

The campus is heated using district steam from the Cleveland Thermal steam plant, and cooled by our own chilled water plant!

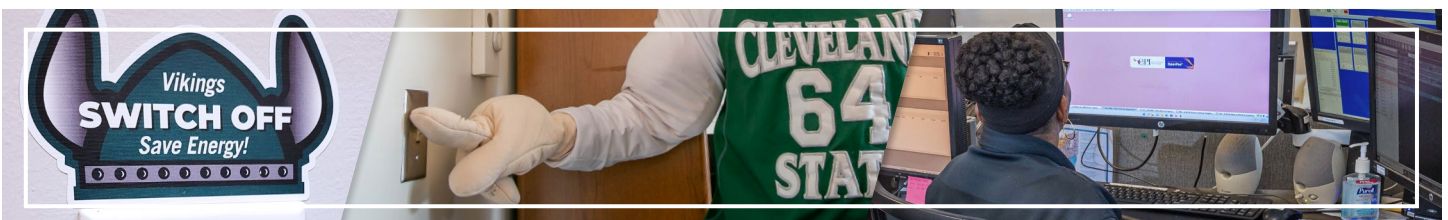
Many spaces are controlled through a building automation system, but if your office has its own thermostat, you can maximize energy savings with the following guidelines:

- ➔ During the wintertime heating months, set your thermostat to **68–70°F**
- ➔ In the summertime cooling months, set your thermostat between **74–76°F**

### AT HOME

You can save as much as **10% a year** on heating and cooling at home by using a programmable thermostat and setting it back 7°–10°F from its occupied setting while you're away.

*Remember, the **smaller** the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the **lower** your overall utility bill will be!*



## EVENTS AND MEETINGS



Events and meetings are an essential part of office life, but they can also create lots of waste. Refer to the [CSU Green Event Guide](#) for in-depth information on how to plan eco-friendly events and meetings. The suggestions in this guide will provide a good starting point for how to limit waste and conserve energy.

### VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Minimizing air travel and choosing alternative modes of transportation helps to reduce our contribution to climate change.

- ➔ Utilize video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Teams.
- ➔ Take advantage of the many Interactive Video Distance Learning (IVDL) classrooms on campus.
- ➔ Walk to meetings on campus and carpool to meetings off campus.

### CATERING

The Viking Food Co. uses compostable tableware such as plates, cups, and cutlery for catering and many food options are sourced from local and sustainable ingredients.

- ➔ Livestock represents [14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions](#). Reduce meat consumption and consider selecting plant-based menus.
- ➔ Choose locally sourced foods whenever possible to reduce the emissions associated with transportation and to support the local economy.
- ➔ Limit single use water bottles and beverages. Instead, request pitchers or dispensers with reusable or compostable cups.
- ➔ If using an approved off-campus catering provider, request low waste options.

## PURCHASING



Sustainability starts with the products we bring onto campus. While recycling gets a lot of attention, purchasing durable and sustainable products is just as important as their disposal. By following these steps, you can help prevent excess waste when purchasing supplies.

### Durability and Reuse

Purchase durable and reusable office supplies from university approved vendors. It can be worth paying more for a product that will last longer, rather than having to replace it more frequently.

### Avoid Over Purchasing

Maintain a comprehensive inventory of office equipment and consumables. Before placing an order, check the inventory to avoid over purchasing.

### Paper

When buying paper, choose recycled content and look for sustainability certifications such as Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Preferred brands include Boise Aspen and Staples.

### Limit Packaging

When available, select product options with less packaging or packaging that can be recycled or reused.

### Consolidate Orders

Consolidate purchases to avoid multiple deliveries and reduce packaging materials.



# RECYCLING AND WASTE



Cleveland State has had a recycling program in place for over 20 years! The following summary explains what materials are recyclable on campus and how CSU's recycling system works. Remember that reducing and reusing should always come before recycling!

## Campus Bins

Waste and recycling bins are conveniently located across campus and they use a color-coded bag system. Trash bins use gray or black plastic bags and recycling bins use white or clear bags. Custodians ensure that recycling bags are deposited in a designated recycling cart, while trash bags go into a compactor or dumpster.



## Plastic and Cans

Metal cans and plastic bottles can be recycled in bins that are grey with green lids. Do not include plastic bags or items with excessive food residue.

## Paper

Recycling bins for paper are entirely blue. Clean mixed papers can be put in these bins including copy paper, newspapers, magazines, envelopes, junk mail, greeting cards, snack boxes and phone books.

## Cardboard Boxes

Cardboard can be left by recycling bins and will be collected by custodial staff for recycling. Flattening the cardboard is appreciated.

## Plastic Bags

Clean and dry plastic bags can be placed in the designated bins in the lobby of Rhodes Tower.

## Pens and Markers

Pens and markers can be recycled in the tall TerraCycle boxes located near the information desk in the Student Center, in student residence lobbies, and in the Rhodes Tower lobby.

## Batteries

Batteries can be recycled in clear cylinder tubes at 24 locations across campus. Bin locations and types of batteries accepted can be found on the [sustainability website](#).

## Toner Cartridges

CSU utilizes the Xerox Eco Box program for recycling toner cartridges and used printing supplies. Departments can collect used and obsolete toner cartridges for recycling. Collection and shipping can be arranged by contacting the Logistics Department.

## E-Waste

Property Control offers electronic waste recycling and secure memory disposal services. This helps to keep valuable and sometimes toxic components out of landfill.

## REUSABLE MATERIALS

- ➔ Minimize the purchase of disposable products such as paper plates, plastic utensils, and single serve coffee pods and cups.
- ➔ Bring lunches in reusable containers and encourage others to bring their own reusable mugs, lunch boxes and cutlery.
- ➔ Avoid bottled water—fill reusable bottles using the filtered water stations across campus.
- ➔ For meetings and events, provide water pitchers and reusable glasses rather than bottled water.
- ➔ Bring a reusable mug for coffee and get a discount on coffee at cafes across campus.
- ➔ CSU Property Control collects and redistributes used furniture. If your office needs furniture, contact Property Control to see if they have what you need first.
- ➔ Reuse interdepartmental mail envelopes as much as possible.
- ➔ Designate collection spots for reusable materials and office supplies.

# TRANSPORTATION



The [transportation sector is responsible for 29%](#) of the United States' greenhouse gas emissions. The campus motor pool includes five fully electric vehicles. CSU's urban location allows for many forms of alternative transportation including public transportation, carpooling, bicycles and scooters.

## Public Transportation

The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) and Laketran both offer routes to campus and Park-N-Ride services. The Commuter Advantage Program allows eligible faculty and staff to purchase GCRTA bus passes via payroll deduction.

## Carpooling

CSU utilizes [Gohio Commute](#) to offer carpooling options to students, faculty and staff. The tool allows you to see all transportation options from point A to point B and it allows members to narrow their carpooling search to include only CSU employees or students.

## Ride-Sharing

Zipcar offers students, staff, and faculty access to a short-term rental car. Currently, there are five Zipcars on campus that can be reserved online for the day or for just a few hours.

## Bikes and Scooters

CSU offers designated parking for bikes and scooters across campus. Scooters and bikes are available to rent for short rides around the city. They are activated through a smartphone app and user account with one of the companies permitted to operate in Cleveland.

## EV Charging

Electric vehicle charging stations are located in the Student Center Garage (Lot 22). Payment for visitor parking or a valid CSU parking permit (of any color) is required to use the charging stations.

# INDOOR AIR QUALITY



Most Americans spend up to 90% of their time indoors. Studies conducted by the EPA have shown that indoor environments can sometimes have levels of pollutants that are higher than levels found outside. Good indoor air quality depends on the actions of everyone in the building.

## Chemicals

Avoid toxic chemicals found in many cleaning wipes and sprays. Instead, use safer ingredients like citric acid, hydrogen peroxide and alcohol.

## Disinfectants

Limit disinfectant use to high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, keyboards and light switches.

## Greenery

Add a plant to your windowsill—they increase oxygen levels, boost your mood and improve air quality.

## Air Flow

Do not block supply vents or return air grilles. This can affect air flow to the HVAC system and affect the ventilation of a neighboring office.

## Tobacco Free Campus Policy

Comply with the campus policy which prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco on campus.

## Renovation Projects

Renovation projects can impact air quality both from construction itself, and from the selection of furniture and finishes. Campus renovations must be coordinated through the Office of the University Architect in order to meet a variety of specifications including low- or no-VOC paints and adhesives.



# WATER



A leaky faucet that drips at a rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. Through conservation measures and water efficient fixtures, CSU has achieved a 37% reduction in potable water use per square foot since 2005. Because of the significant amount of energy associated with heating water, water savings also lead to a decrease in energy costs. Here is what you can do to help conserve water:

## Conserve

Be mindful of water consumption and avoid leaving water running for longer than necessary.

## Run Full Loads

If your office space has a kitchen with a dishwasher, make sure it is full before running a load.

## Report Leaks

Report leaky faucets and running toilets to the Facilities Department by calling 216-687-2500 or by emailing [fastrequest@csuohio.edu](mailto:fastrequest@csuohio.edu).





Thank you for your efforts in creating an **environmentally sustainable** office environment!

**PLEASE SHARE THIS GUIDE WITH COLLEAGUES AND NEW EMPLOYEES.**






  
**CSU**  
 Cleveland State University

  
 CSU SUSTAINABILITY MOVEMENT

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Learn more about campus sustainability at [csuohio.edu/sustainability](https://csuohio.edu/sustainability).

Notice energy or water being wasted on campus? Report it to Facilities by calling 216-687-2500 or emailing [FASTrequest@csuohio.edu](mailto:FASTrequest@csuohio.edu)

 | Office of Sustainability

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