

Guide to Living Laker Green



Sustainability
SUNY OSWEGO

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What is Laker Green?

SUNY Oswego has a longstanding pledge to sustainability. On September 15, 2007, President Deborah F. Stanley signed the **American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment** (ACUPCC) to demonstrate both regional and national sustainability leadership by modeling our campus as an example of ways society can reduce their carbon footprint. This aligns with SUNY's roadmap to clean energy and standards set forth by the NYS governor.

Being "Laker Green" is more than wearing our green and gold with pride, it is acknowledging that we have the power to act with compassion, understanding, and hope. Sitting on the shores of Lake Ontario, it is our responsibility to be stewards of the lake and uphold its unique and eminent value. We are able to reduce our environmental impact and be at the forefront of environmental change. What better time to start than right now. This guide shows simple changes we can make to live more environmentally responsible lives, ultimately to the benefit of one another. Remember -- it is okay to be imperfect. Simply embrace your autonomy and find mindfulness in everything you do, whether it be where you buy your meal or who you vote for in elections.

A collective effort is crucial when tackling issues such as climate change, and each one of us plays an integral role in upholding our campus's commitment to sustainability. The following tips and recommendations contribute to local economies and promote a healthy circulation of money, encouraging local economic growth. This guide serves as a reference for creating a sustainable and responsible lifestyle.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

We take health and safety very seriously at SUNY Oswego and want to ensure that everyone within our campus community is following guidelines and respecting those around them. For any questions regarding how SUNY Oswego is responding to the pandemic and the guidelines that must be followed, please view the campus's Oswego Forward plan [here!](#)

Tips for Living Laker Green...

Conserving energy

- Dress for the season. Layering in the winter months will allow you to keep the thermostat set lower and **reduce your energy consumption**.
- Ever hear of the **benefits of cold showers**? Aside from removing the need to heat water, lowering your shower temperature has been seen to improve hair and skin, promote muscle recovery, and boost immunity and circulation.
- Avoid the use of space heaters and mini fridges; they are energy hogs!
- Utilize **natural lighting** during the daytime.
- **Unplug and turn off power sources** when not in use: lights, printers, chargers, power strips, kitchen appliances, etc.
- Use **power saving mode** on your electronics.

Conserving Water

- Replace animal products in your diet with **plant-based foods**. Beef requires 6 times more water per gram of protein than pulses (the edible seed of a legume). [Click here](#) to compare the environmental impacts of different foods.
- Invest in a water-efficient shower head. If you're renting or are unable to make fixture replacements, start by **shortening shower lengths**.
- Have a **dishwasher**? Use that instead of hand-washing! Using an Energy Star certified dishwasher can save you up to 5,000 gallons of water per year.
- **Turn off water** while brushing your teeth and washing your face.

Our Great Lakes

- **History:** Around 14,000 years ago Canada was covered with the Laurentide Glacier and it began melting. As the melting process began the glacier melt became *Lake Iroquois*, which was a much larger version of Lake Ontario today.
- **Quick Facts:**
 - Lake Ontario provides drinking water to 9 million people.
 - The lake never completely freezes because it is so deep. The surface of Lake Ontario has frozen over at least five times, the last time in 1934.
 - Lake Ontario has a "seiche", a natural rhythmic motion as water sloshes back and forth every 11 minutes.
 - Water takes about 6 years to flow through Lake Ontario to the St. Lawrence River.
 - "Lake Ontario" means "lake of shining waters".

Sustainable Weekends

Enjoy your weekends, whether exciting or relaxing, and know you are doing your part to help the environment. Here are some easy tips on how to be more sustainable on your days off.

- Get your weekend wardrobe at a **thrift store**! Our local second-hand store, Thrifty Shopper, has tons of unique finds for extremely affordable prices (plus 25% off for students on Thursdays). Thrifting contribute much less to greenhouse gas emissions or resource exploitation, unlike the production of fast-fashion.
- Thursdays are **Mug Night** at Old City! Buy a mug, refill it for just a couple of quarters, and bring it back for next week's Mug Night. This reduces waste from single-use plastic cups, saves you money, and is a fun way to immerse yourself in Oswego nightlife.
- **BYOC (bring your own cup)** to gatherings. Not only does this reduce single-use plastic cup waste (red solo cups take 450 years to decompose), but it also guarantees you won't lose your cup or confuse it with someone else's.
- Use **reusable** plates and utensils for food. This will keep a lot of single-use plastic and/or styrofoam items from entering landfills and waterways.
- **Turn all of the lights** off when watching TV or a movie. This makes for a great theater-esque ambiance while saving money, energy and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Make your own decorations instead of buying single-use ones. There are plenty of **DIY decor** ideas online that you can make from things you may already have in your home such as mason jars, paper, paints, lights, you name it!
- Offer **locally sourced snacks**. Buying locally cuts down on carbon emissions from transportation and contributes to your local economy. Check out [this page](#) for local places to grab food!



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

A saying old as time, yet important to reiterate. The sequence of this motto is crucial; recycling is last in the phrase for a reason. We must first look for ways to reduce consumption, then get creative with what we already own. It is last that we should look to recycle; it is estimated that 75% of Americans' waste is recyclable, yet only 30% of it gets recycled.

Reduce

- On campus, take only what you will eat in the dining halls (you can always go back for seconds). The typical college student generates **2.72 lbs. of food waste** per week.
- **Say no to freebies** that you do not need -- like water bottles, pop-sockets, stickers, etc.
- If only buying a few things at the store, politely **decline a bag**.
- Only buy what you need and will consume before it goes bad -- **making a shopping list** helps.
- Bring **reusable bags** shopping with you.
- Things like beans, grains, and dried fruit can be **bought in bulk**, which reduces packaging.
- Opt for **electronic bank statements**.

Reuse

- Invest in **reusable products** such as shopping bags, coffee mugs, food containers, and even napkins. This is also very cost effective as it lessens your reliance on disposable products and helps avoid bag taxes at grocery stores.
- Thrift stores have great finds, and not just with clothes. Many **secondhand stores** also carry kitchenware, furniture, and books. [Click here](#) to be redirected to local thrifting options. You can also donate old or unwanted items to local thrift stores or to the Office of Sustainability on campus at the end of each semester.
- Old scrappy clothes work well as cleaning **rags**.
- **Regrow vegetables in your own kitchen** with just a glass of water. Foods that do well include green onion, romaine lettuce, and celery.
- Start a small-scale **compost** project at home with food scraps!

Recycle

- **Read up** on your town's recycling restrictions -- there are regional differences! [Click here](#) for Oswego County's guidelines.
- Dispose of **electronic-waste** properly. Some companies (e.g. Apple, Best Buy, Dell, Asus) will accept items to be mailed back to them. Most counties have electronic-waste disposal sites at the local transfer station.
- **Clean out food containers** before placing in the recycling bin. Food or liquid residue may prevent the item from being recycled.

- Around campus, drop any dead markers or pens into the small bins labeled “Leave Your Mark” in each classroom.
- What items can be recycled at SUNY Oswego?
 - Glass bottles
 - Metal cans
 - Plastic: food, cleaner and personal care bottles, jugs or tubs with the numbers 1-7 on the bottom
 - Paper beverage cartons: milk and juice cartons and drink boxes
 - Office paper: copy/printer paper. Envelopes (no plastic windows). Post-it notes, stationery, greeting cards
 - Other paper: newspapers, magazines, brown bags, gift wrap
 - Corrugated cardboard, and pizza boxes, cereal boxes, tissue or gift boxes (no food residuals or waxed paper)
 - Electronic equipment including computers, monitors, printers, photocopiers, typewriters, fax machines, shredders, network switches, projectors, cameras and broadcasting, and batteries

Leave Your Mark: Around campus, you may notice small wooden boxes magnetized to white boards. What’s their purpose? You can dispose of any used writing utensils into these bins and they will be properly recycled through [TerraCycle](#).

Recycling around campus: Curious how recycling works on campus? If you live in the residence halls, simply bring your recyclables down to the recycling room in your building and the recycling technician will help you sort items properly. Outside of the dorms, every building is equipped with trash and paper/plastic recycling bins.

Electronics: Office of Sustainability

Ink and toner cartridges: Environmental Health and Safety (110 Lee Hall)

Batteries: All academic buildings, Office of Sustainability, Penfield Library, Rich Hall, Marano Campus Center Welcome Desk

Recycling in the City of Oswego: While the city does not have designated recycling trucks, you can bring your recyclables (and old electronics/appliances) to our local transfer station.

Address: 700 E Seneca St, Oswego, NY 13126; [click here](#) for hour

Initiatives On & Around Campus

Transportation

Confused how to work the bus system in Oswego? That’s why we’ve developed **BusShare**, a website that finds you the most efficient route to get to and from your desired destinations in Oswego. You can find the website [here](#).

BikeShare is a campus organization that provides bicycle loan and maintenance services to the SUNY Oswego campus, free of charge, for semester or year-long durations. This program offers a healthy, economical and environmentally friendly alternative to traditional vehicular transportation.

Contact: bikshare@oswego.edu

Grand Challenge: Fresh Water for All

From our Grand Challenges website “From the immensity of Lake Ontario to our north, the Oswego River to our east, the wetlands to our west, and the lakes and streams to our south, the SUNY Oswego neighborhood is surrounded and defined by fresh water. In fact, there is an abundance of water on our planet. And yet the lack of fresh water is responsible for more deaths in the world than war is. Our common investigations and activities are happening at a global tipping point.”

From 2018-2021, SUNY Oswego has been collecting writing and art surrounding the topic “**Fresh Water for All**” to promote the importance of water accessibility worldwide. Submissions, to be published in the Grand Challenge Anthology, can come from students, faculty, and staff and are highly encouraged. For further information, [click here](#).

Since partnering with Cupanion, our campus has decreased the use of single-plastic water bottles tremendously. **As of 2020, over 1 million plastic water bottles have been eliminated from the waste stream.** Stop by the Office of Sustainability to grab a Tap-In sticker for your water bottle and scan it on the [Fill it Forward](#) app every time you refill -- scans add up to points which will contribute to water projects around the world and help you win sustainable swag! If you don't have a refillable water bottle of your own, the Office of Sustainability will gladly give you one.

Zero-Waste Events

Aligning with the Solid Waste Association of North America's zero-waste definition, “we will make every effort to reduce waste generation to nothing, or as close to nothing as possible, by minimizing excess resource consumption and maximizing the recovery of waste.” If you are holding an on-campus event with your club or organization, consider making it a zero-waste event. This includes replacing disposable products (plastic cups, plastic utensils, paper napkins) with reusable ones (glass china, metal utensils, and fabric napkins), supplying small compost bins for food and organic waste, (you can contact our office for information on this) and ordering just enough food for the predicted number of people. By increasing the number of zero-waste events on campus, you can help contribute to reducing our campus's waste and making “zero-waste” the new norm!

S.H.O.P.

Students Helping Oz Peers (SHOP) is a resource for campus-members in need of food, personal care items, and even business clothes/winter attire; everything is free of charge. They also accept donations! Location: Penfield Library basement. [Click here](#) for hours and updates. shop@oswego.edu

Eating Green on Campus

Eating responsibly looks like:

- Sourcing food locally; SUNY Oswego sources 1/3 of its food purchases from local farms.
- Increasing plant-based products into diet.
- Reducing food waste.

On Campus:

SUNY Oswego's dining services offer a wide variety of vegetarian and plant-based eating. Look for dining hall items with the following labels:



Our dining halls always have a stocked salad bar and a vegan-friendly deli bar with endless options for creative and delicious eating. To avoid over-serving yourself which may result in food being tossed, try going tray-less. Without a tray, you are more likely to put the amount of food on your plate that you are hungry for. If you polish your food off and are still hungry, you can always go back for more! The overall goal is to improve our sustainable and healthy habits.

Eating off-campus:

Plant-based eating can be daunting at first, especially when you purchase your own groceries. How do you get protein? Isn't it super expensive? I don't want to just be eating grass! Check out [this video](#) that serves as a step-by-step guide to an introductory plant-based meal and dessert, both mouth-wateringly scrumptious. Short on time? The video's description provides all ingredients and external resources with more information and recipes. [Click here](#) to check out a list of local restaurants and grocery stores with great options.

Clubs / Orgs on campus

Outdoors Club

Come explore the outdoors with the ODC! Weekly trips include hiking, camping, backpacking, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, high-ropes adventure courses, and more.

Instagram: @oswegooutdoorsclub

Facebook: SUNY Oswego Outdoors Club

Laker Life: <https://lakerlife.oswego.edu/organization/outdoorsclub>

Ecology Club

Interested in the inner workings of our ecosystems and the importance of different species? Come check out the Ecology Club to further appreciate the complexity of nature.

Contact: seeds.oeco@gmail.com

Laker Life: <https://lakerlife.oswego.edu/organization/oeco>

Shining Waters

This group focuses on the ecological preservation of Lake Ontario and our campus by hosting weekly clean ups at Rice Creek and along the lake shore. Interested students can sign up for one or multiple clean ups throughout the semester. No commitment is required.

Contact: shiningwaters@oswego.edu

Student Association (SA)

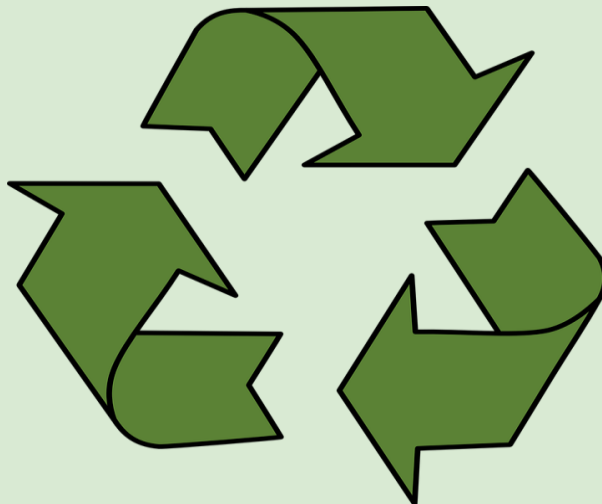
If you are looking to make changes on our campus, getting involved in our student government is a great place to start. The cabinet is made up of various directors, each with their special area of focus. The Director of Sustainability is delegated with the task of pursuing sustainable change in alignment with the current SA president's goals. An annual position, applications are open every summer. Keep an eye out from sa.president@oswego.edu with application information each May. Not interested in such a big role? SA president's sometimes appoint special councils to work in certain focus areas, including sustainability.

Office of Sustainability

Our campus's commitment to sustainability is backboned by a dedicated office. Here, a group of student interns and the Sustainability Planning Coordinator work together to uphold existing programs, create new initiatives, and push our campus in a green direction. If interested in working for the office, send katherine.spector@oswego.edu an email.

Contact: sustainability@oswego.edu

Website: <https://www.oswego.edu/sustainability/>



Eating and Buying Local

Oswego

Oswego Farmers Market
Late May - October
Thursdays 4:30 - 8:30 pm
W. 1st St. b/w Bridge and Oneida St.

Ontario Orchards
7735 St. Rte. 104
<https://ontarioorchards.com>

Azteca Mexican Grill
53 E. Bridge Street
<https://www.aztecacny.com/>

Green Planet Grocery (some local & bulk)
250 W. Seneca St., Suite C
<https://www.facebook.com/GreenPlanetGroceryOswego/>

Nora's Cafe
203 W. 1st Street
<https://www.facebook.com/norasoswego/>

3.2.1 Salads
81 E. Bridge Street
(315) 216-6040
www.321salads.com

The Mix
104 W. Bridge St
<https://www.themixny.com/>

Thrifty Shopper
57 E. Bridge Street

La Parrilla
156 W Second St
(315) 216-4179

Shop Oswego Live Oswego (SOLO)
<http://www.shoposwegoliveoswego.com/>

Syracuse

Strong Hearts Cafe
Website: <https://www.strongheartscafe.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StrongHeartsCafe/>

PMA Foods
Website: <https://www.strongheartscafe.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PMAFoods/>

CNY Regional Market
Website: <https://www.cnyregionalmarket.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CNYRMA/>

[Click here](#) for a full list of vegetarian, vegan, and local options in Syracuse.

Activities & Recreation

Local Groups

[Cornell Cooperative Extension Oswego County](#)

[Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District](#)

[Great Law of Peace Center](#)

[Oswego County Environmental Management Council](#)

[Rice Creek Associates](#)

[Sea Grant](#)

[LIFT Oswego County](#)

Oswego County Green Team
Contact: bobgreen@windstream.net

[Onondaga Lake Cleanup](#)

[Syracuse Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby](#)

[Beaver Lake Nature Center](#)

[Oswego Tree Stewards](#)

Outdoor Outfitters

[Murdock's Bicycle and Sports](#)
177 W 1st St
Oswego, NY 13126

Cicero, NY 13039
Eddie Bauer
Destiny USA
Syracuse, NY 13204

[Douglas Outdoors](#)
43 County Rte 59
Phoenix, NY 13135

All Seasons Outfitters
3179 Erie Blvd E #194
Syracuse, NY 13214

L.L.Bean
304 Towne, Center St
Fayetteville, NY 13066

REI Co-op
450 E Henrietta Rd
Rochester, NY 14620

Gander Outdoors
5864 Camenica Dr

Outdoor Recreation

< 30 minutes

Rice Creek Field Station
193 Thompson Road
Oswego, NY 13126

<https://www.oswego.edu/rice-creek/home>

Battle Island State Park

Fair Haven Beach State Park

Fallbrook

Lake Shore Marshes Wildlife Management
Area

Wolcott Falls

Great Bear Recreation Area

Beaver Lake Nature Center

Sterling Nature Center

30 mins - 1 hr

Chimney Bluffs State Park

Winona State Forest

Salmon River Falls

Deer Creek Marsh Wildlife Management
Area

Lakeview Wildlife Management Area

Robert G. Wehle State Park

Green Lakes State Park

Green Media

Here are a few of our favorite media-based resources pertaining to sustainable and plant-based living. Check them out!

Movies & Documentaries

- The Game Changers (Netflix)
- Rotten (Netflix)
- A Plastic Ocean (Netflix)
- Before The Flood (Amazon Video)
- Our Planet (Netflix)
- Blackfish (Netflix)
- Tiny: A Story About Living Small
- Knock Down the House (Netflix)
- An Inconvenient Squeal: Truth to Power
- Gasland

Books & Journals

- *Sustainability: The Journal of Record*
- Mollison, B C. *Permaculture: A Designer's Manual*.
- Greta Thunberg. *No One Is Too Small To Make A Difference*.
- Rachel Carson *Silent Spring*
- Elizabeth Kolbert *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*
- Naomi Klein. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*.
- James Baldwin *The Fire Next Time*
- Sue Stuart-Smith *The Well Gardened Mind: The Restorative Powers of Nature*.
- Robin Wall Kimmerer *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*.
- Gloria Anzaldúa *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
- Michael Pollan *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World*
- Paul Wheaton & Shawn Klassen-Koop *Building a Better World in Your Backyard*.

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