

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville commits itself to living more sustainably upon the Earth. We covenant with one another to:

- Be more intentional in our choices and decision-making;
- Practice a willingness to learn new behaviors from one another; and
- Collaborate together as we seek creative and practical solutions that will enable us to practice sustainability.

We commit to choosing and supporting the most environmentally sound and sustainable practices in our congregational activities. The intention is to give priority to such practices, but we recognize that there may be other factors that affect the choices, such as availability and costs. This policy includes, but is not limited to, the following practices:

1. Purchasing and using:

- Products made of and prepared with renewable resources
- Products made of recycled materials, such as paper that is 100% recycled materials
- Items produced through environmentally friendly processes
- Items produced by companies recognized for adherence to environmentally sound and socially responsible business practices.

2. Avoiding materials that are toxic in the environment:

- Pesticides, herbicides, insect repellants, and other lawn and/or garden chemicals
- Paints, stains, solvents, or building materials containing and/or produced with hazardous chemicals
- High-phosphate detergents
- Cleaning products and polishes containing chlorine or ammonia
- All aerosol containers
- Toxic art/craft supplies
- Bleached or dyed paper products

3. Conserving energy:

- Using heating, air conditioning, and lighting only when necessary
- Checking to see that all appliances and lights are off when leaving the building
- Replacing standard incandescent light bulbs with LEDs
- Replacing standard fluorescent lights with T8 or LED strips
- Replacing older, less-efficient appliances with more energy-efficient models
- Using auto on/off light switches for rooms that only have occasional use, such as restrooms

4. Conserving water:

- Reporting dripping faucets, running toilets, etc., to office
- Replacing old toilet fixtures with new low-flow models
- Harvesting rainwater for outdoor watering needs
- Replacing older, less-efficient appliances with more water-efficient models

5. Conserving fossil fuels:

- Carpooling, walking, or cycling to UU services and events
- Supporting renewable energy sources for energy needs, including on-site power generation and the purchase of green power from off-site sources

6. Recycling:

- Paper, aluminum, and glass
- Small batteries
- Copier and printer cartridges
- Computer equipment
- Other electronic devices

7. Managing the UUCA facility and grounds with environmental and social responsibility in mind:

- Planting native vegetation
- Removing invasive alien vegetation
- Reducing storm-water runoff from buildings and grounds through the use of infiltrating water gardens
- Minimizing exterior light sources when the building is not in use to reduce light pollution
- Planning construction and/or remodeling with environmental and social responsibility in mind

8. Being environmentally conscious when planning and serving food, refreshments, or snacks at meetings and events:

- Supporting choices for foods that are sustainably grown, local, and organic
- Limiting inclusion of processed and overpackaged foods
- Using glass, china, and cutlery instead of throwaway paper or plastic, recognizing that the size or location of the event may preclude this option (if so, consideration may be given to compostable products)

9. Encouraging investment of UUCA holdings in environmentally and socially responsible funds.

Revision History	
Responsible Staff Member: Associate Minister	
Date	Description of revision
June 2008	Resolution of Congregation
February 2016	Update to new format
April 2017	Minor revisions of word choice and updates to reflect changes in technology (LED is now preferable to CFL lighting), new landscaping (drought-tolerant plants to lessen watering), and current investment process (managed by the UUA)