



# Sustainable Living Guide

INFORMATION & TIPS

USC Housing

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# In Your Room

# ENERGY

## Want to be more sustainable?

The best place to start is in your room. There are many things you can do to decrease your energy usage and lower your environmental footprint while living in sunny Southern California. Your room is your space, so let's get personal!



## NUMBERS

### ELECTRICITY USAGE

USC Housing residents use about

**16.2 million kWh**

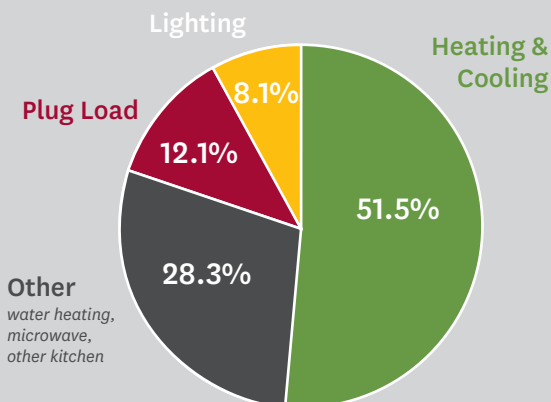
of electricity each year – with energy equivalent to the fuel it would take to:

**DRIVE AROUND THE EQUATOR 1,100 TIMES**

**COOK BREAKFAST FOR THE POPULATIONS OF CALIFORNIA AND TEXAS**

**WASH 194 MILLION POUNDS OF LAUNDRY**

### HOUSING AVERAGE ENERGY BREAKDOWN



## TIPS & ACTIONS

### 1. USE NATURAL LIGHTING DURING THE DAY

Open those blinds and use natural lighting during the day. When you do need to turn on lights, use desk lamps instead of overhead lamps. This is called “task lighting.” Not only does task lighting use less energy, it also increases productivity.

### 2. ADJUST TEMPERATURES SEASONALLY

Adjust your heating and cooling to better align with outdoor temperatures (68° in the winter and 78° in the summer). Better yet, dress for the weather and wear a sweater in the winter and lighter fabrics in the summer to avoid turning on heating or cooling altogether.

### 3. USE LEDs

Replace the incandescent bulb in your desk lamp with an LED bulb, which is more energy efficient. LEDs use 90% less energy and produce about 70-90% less heat.

### 4. UNPLUG ELECTRONICS

Did you know that your electronics use energy when they're plugged in, even if they aren't on? This is called “vampire power.” Cut down on vampire power by unplugging your electronics when they aren't in use.



*Purchase an area rug for your room. Not only will it look good, it'll add warmth underfoot meaning you'll be less likely to turn on the heat.*

# In the Laundry Room & Bathroom

# WATER

**Next stop on our sustainability tour? The laundry room and bathroom!**

These two areas are resource hogs, consuming both water and energy. Let's get started, so you can green up while you clean up.

## NUMBERS

### WATER USAGE

Housing residents use approximately **68 million gallons of water a year**, that's enough water to:

- Fill 2,300 backyard pools
- Cover the Coliseum in 11 feet of water

### ENERGY FOR HEATING WATER

Not only is water used in the bathroom, energy is also used to heat water. It takes **1.7 kWh of electricity for a 7 minute shower**. This is enough electricity to power a lightbulb for 14 hours.

### WATER SAVED BY TAKING SHORTER SHOWERS

You will save **5,500 gallons of water a year** by taking a 5 minute shower. If all USC Housing residents did this, we would save **35.5 million gallons of water a year** - enough to do laundry for the entire state of Nebraska. H<sub>2</sub> WOAH!

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### Laundry Room

#### ONLY WASH FULL LOADS OF LAUNDRY

Get the most out of your wash by only washing full loads of laundry. If you only have enough laundry for a half-load, offer to share the wash with a friend.

#### USE COLD WATER

It takes energy to heat water, so try using cold water to wash your clothes. Check out 'Numbers' above for more information about the amount of energy needed to heat water.

#### SWITCH TO LAUNDRY DETERGENT SHEETS

These sheets take up less space, generate less plastic and contribute less carbon emissions.

### Bathroom

#### TURN OFF FAUCET

Shaving? Washing your face? Brushing your teeth? Turn off the faucet when you aren't actively using it.

#### TAKE SHORTER SHOWERS

We love showers just as much as you, but cutting your shower time by 2 minutes every day can save 28 gallons a week.

#### REPORT LEAKS TO MAINTENANCE

A small faucet leak can waste up to 20 gallons a day. Report leaks to Housing Maintenance by submitting a work order at [housing.usc.edu](http://housing.usc.edu).

#### USE ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Many personal care products contain potentially harmful ingredients. Skip the sulfates and buy natural alternatives. Your body and the environment will thank you!



*Avoid microbeads - those tiny plastic particles in your personal care products. Instead, choose cosmetics with natural ingredients like walnut shells or sugar.*

# In the Trash Room

# WASTE

Did you know President Folt set a Zero Waste by 2028 goal for the university?

This means 90% of all campus waste will be reduced, reused, donated, recycled or composted instead of being sent to a landfill or incineration.



## WASTE DIVERSION

Multi-stream bins are being installed campus-wide. These bins offer access to the proper disposal options (landfill, recycle and compost) wherever students are.

## USC ANNUAL WASTE GENERATION

USC generates **11,000 tons of waste** annually - that weighs as much as 52 blue whales. Luckily, 53.5% of this waste is recycled.

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### 1. REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

This clever alliteration is the most important rule to consider when it comes to diverting materials from landfills.

#### Reduce

First, reduce what you purchase. Before buying something think, "do I really need that?"

#### Reuse

Secondly, reuse what you have. Find a second life for something you would normally throw away.

#### Recycle

Thirdly, if you do need to get rid of something, recycle it. Recycling reduces waste sent to landfills, saves energy, and conserves natural resources.



### 2. FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING PRACTICES ON CAMPUS

Recycling and composting practices can vary from city to city and state to state. To learn more about composting and recycling, take a look at USC's recycling guidelines [here](#).

### 3. PURCHASE REUSABLE GOODS

Purchasing reusable goods like bags, water bottles, and flatware decreases the need for single-use items that will end up in a landfill. Prioritize buying items secondhand, which will save money and is better for the environment.

### 4. SHARE, DONATE, OR SELL

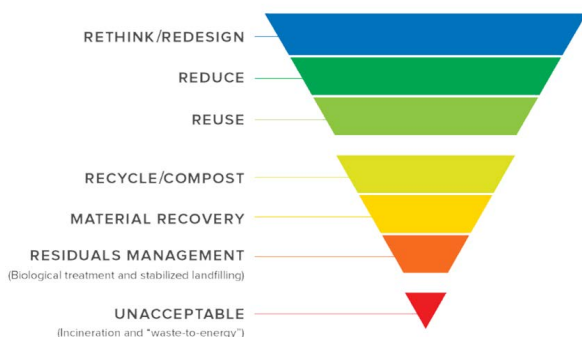
Have something that you no longer want but still has a usable life? Find someone else who can use it. Try some of these methods: Donate to a thrift shop, visit the flea market, check out social media group, or sell it online.



*Keep your reusable bags in your car or backpack to make sure you never forget them while shopping!*

## THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY 8.0

For detailed version visit [www.zwia.org/zwh](http://www.zwia.org/zwh)





Changing your diet is one of the more significant ways you can decrease your overall environmental impact due to all of the land, water, and energy it takes to grow our food. With that in mind, USC has a 14-point food philosophy that can help guide you on your way to making environmentally friendly food choices.

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### 1. CHOOSE LOCAL, ORGANIC, AND SEASONAL FOODS

Local foods cut down on food-miles traveled; organic foods are grown without harmful pesticides; and seasonal foods are fresher and packed with more nutrients. Check labels at the dining halls to find local foods.

### 2. FOCUS ON MINIMALLY-PROCESSED FOODS

Processed foods are higher in fat, sugar, and salt. Plus, they require more energy to produce and more packaging for transport. Help your body and the environment by choosing minimally processed foods which can be found in the dining halls and in many restaurants on campus.

### 3. ONLY TAKE WHAT YOU KNOW YOU WILL EAT

Reduce food waste by taking appropriate portion sizes. Still hungry? You can always go back for seconds, or thirds, or fourths...

### 4. THINK “PRODUCE FIRST” TO EAT LOWER ON THE FOOD CHAIN

Eating a plant-based diet saves energy and water, and cuts down on carbon dioxide emissions. If eating more vegetables intimidates you, you can start small by eating chicken instead of red meat once a week.

## USC Hospitality

USC has **banned the sale of all single use plastic beverage bottles** as of July 1, 2022

USC Hospitality **no longer uses food packaging products that contain PFAS**

All packaging used by USC Hospitality is **fully compostable**

USC Residential Dining Halls are **Green Restaurant Certified**

USC Hospitality is **Food Recovery Network** verified in our **fight against food waste hunger on campus**

USC Residential Dining Halls operates a **reusable to-go containers program**, removing approximately **10,000 pounds** of trash and over **70,000 single use compostable containers** from the waste stream annually



*Lettuce, tomatoes, and beets OH MY!*

*Check out the Trojan Farmers Market, every Wednesday from 11AM - 3PM at McCarthy Quad.*





Leave your car at home, USC Transportation has you covered. Partnerships with ZipCar, Enterprise, and Lyft make it easy to get access to a vehicle.

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### WALK OR BIKE

Best way to reduce your transportation emissions? Walk or bike to your destination. Help the environment and burn some calories at the same time.

### USE PUBLIC TRANSIT

Explore L.A. with free USC Buses, and a free U-Pass for unlimited bus and train rides on LA Metro and partner agencies. Go from University Park Campus to the beach in 30 minutes on the E Line, with service to LAX coming soon.

### USE LYFT

The USC Lyft shared-rides program is available to only USC constituents, and provides free rides within geofences and service hours at both campuses.

### CARPOOL

USC encourages carpooling with our online platform Traveler. Carpool permits are also available when you apply with a partner and help keep a single-use vehicle off the campus. Get Traveling!

### TRAVEL LIGHTLY

While it might be tempting to take 5 game day outfit options for the Weekender in San Francisco, choose only 1 instead. The lighter you pack, the less fuel you use while traveling.

### Beep, beep, there goes the bus!

Did you know that transportation accounts for 26% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions? Cut down on these emissions by utilizing sustainable modes of transportation. Thankfully, being a USC student makes this easy.

## NUMBERS

### USC BUS ROUTES

With **13 different bus routes** throughout USC campuses, you're sure to be able to get where you need to go.

### HIERARCHY OF CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS

Trying to take the most carbon efficient form of transportation? See below for a hierarchy of emissions per mile for various forms of transit (listed in order of most efficient to least efficient).



1. Bus



2. Hybrid Car



3. Electric Rail



4. Efficient Car



5. Diesel Rail



6. Typical Car



7. Typical SUV

# On Game Day

# COLISEUM



**Game day.** Where Trojans take titles, and we collectively take time to reduce our waste generation and decrease greenhouse gas emissions to lower our environmental footprint. OK, maybe that's not your main focus, but that doesn't mean it isn't a part of game day.

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### 1. KNOW GAME DAY ZERO WASTE PROCEDURES

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum implemented a Zero Waste program at the stadium prior to the 2015 football season that strives to divert 90% or more of waste materials generated on game day from the landfill. You can help the Coliseum achieve this zero waste goal by placing your waste into the proper bin (Recycle or Compost). If you have any questions, just look for the signage around the stadium to help you make the right choice!

### 2. WALK TO TAILGATES & GAMES

Seems obvious, right? You'd be surprised... we've heard of students taking a rideshare to the Coliseum.

### 3. THINK BEFORE YOU TAKE

Small items like ketchup packets, extra containers for nacho cheese, or napkins may not seem like a big deal, but they quickly add up. The Coliseum sends about 4,000 pounds of waste to landfills every game. So, be conscious of what you take and throw away!

## NUMBERS

### 1,200 TONS

Since 2015, more than 1,200 tons of Coliseum event waste has been successfully diverted from landfills.

### 5 DAYS

It takes about five days to sort through an average of 10 tons of waste per game. That's 20,000 pounds of trash!

### AVERAGE USC FOOTBALL GAME ATTENDANCE

An average of **73,272 fans** show up at the Coliseum for USC football games.



*Make your tailgate sustainable by grilling up turkey burgers instead of hamburgers!*





As a student at the University of Southern California, your primary job is to learn. Learn from your professors, learn from your peers, learn from yourself. **Continue learning how to be a sustainable student by reviewing all of the tips in this guide.**

## PAPER COMES FROM TREES

One tree provides roughly **8,333 sheets of paper**. Replacing 1 ton of virgin paper with 1 ton of 50% post-consumer content paper **saves 12 trees**.



*Take a trip with your friends to The USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies on Catalina Island. The center welcomes public visitors throughout the year, just call (310) 510-0811 and book an appointment.*

## TIPS & ACTIONS

### 1. THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT

Consider natural resources and think before you print. If you do need to print, consider printing double-sided, single spaced with small margins, or printing multiple pages on the same piece of paper.

### 2. TAKE NOTES DIGITALLY

If you already own a laptop or tablet, try using it to take notes. Not only will you save paper, you won't ever have to worry about losing your notes – just make sure you don't lose your laptop!

### 3. TAKE A SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED COURSE

With numerous majors and minors with an environmental focus, sustainability related courses are easy to find here at USC. Plus, because sustainability is so interdisciplinary any student can find a class to take, regardless of major.