

Green Lab Recommendations

The University of Idaho is committed to improving the sustainability of all campus operations, including research and laboratories. Thank you for your interest in promoting positive change!

To accommodate the diversity of lab types and uses, the Green Lab program is an open-format application that allows each lab to highlight sustainable practices in broad categories. Applications are then reviewed by the Office of Sustainability and certifications are awarded to labs making dedicated efforts to integrate sustainable practices into daily operations. To get started, a selection of recommendations are provided below.

While seeking innovative sustainable solutions in your lab space, keep in mind that all labs must meet the standards set by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).

If you have specific event needs not covered in this checklist, please reach out to oliviawiebe@uidaho.edu for tailored suggestions.

Energy

- Applicable equipment is unplugged and/or turned off when not in use
- Computers and monitors are set to energy-saving settings
- Lights are turned off when the lab is empty
- Natural light is utilized when available and safe to do so
- Lab fridges, stoves, or other applicable equipment is replaced with Energy Star rated alternatives when replacement is needed (all equipment must also meet the standards set out by EHS)
- LED bulbs are used when applicable

Water

- Check and report water leaks regularly, including faucets and fixtures
- Only run dishwashers, autoclaves, or other cleaning appliances when full
- Ensure all potentially harmful chemicals are disposed of appropriately according to EHS guidelines
- Invest in water saving devices or timers when safe and applicable
- Invest in non-chemical water treatment devices

Waste

- Recycle accepted materials in the blue single-stream bins
- Replace printed lab catalogues, manuals and resources with online versions (excluding physical copies required by EHS)
- Reuse single-sided paper for printing or notes
- Share resources with neighboring labs
- Pursue recycling programs through specific manufactures (eg: printer cartridges can be mailed by to producers or taken to Staples, unsoiled nitrile gloves can be collected through Terracycle)
- Plant and food waste not altered through experimentation is composted at local collection facilities

Purchasing

- Maintain active inventories of supplies to limit excessive ordering
- Combine orders with neighboring labs
- Supplies made from plastic alternatives are purchased when available
- Supplies made from recycled materials are purchased when available
- EPA Cleaner Choice certified cleaning supplies are purchased when available
- Non-specific use equipment is purchased from UI Surplus

Travel

- Sustainable travel options are utilized when traveling locally or regionally (eg: Carpooling, EVs, public transit, bike or walking)
- Trips are consolidated or co-hosted with other labs
- Online meeting software is used for long-distance conferences or meetings when available
- Lab hosts alternative transportation days to limit personal vehicle use
- Lab teaches and enforces "Pack-In, Pack-Out" policies when in the field

Education

- Incorporate sustainability updates into regular lab meetings
- Create a digital sustainable practices lab manual
- Post educational signage that promotes sustainable behaviors (available upon request)
- Incorporate sustainable practices into new member training

- Maintain communication with the Office of Sustainability for questions and suggestions

Innovations

Use this space to highlight other sustainability practices that are implemented in the lab space.