

Tulane University Releases Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

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Tulane University has released a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, a tool that measures an institution's impact on global climate change. The new inventory covers calendar years 2006-2008 and accounts for all Tulane's campuses in New Orleans, as well as campuses and other research buildings in Harahan, Covington and Belle Chasse, La., and in Houston and Biloxi. The inventory will benchmark and measure the university's progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions as it works toward achieving carbon neutrality, a pledge Tulane University President Scott Cowen made in March 2008, when he signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Carbon neutrality means achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing the amount of any carbon released with measures that reduce such emissions by an equivalent amount. The release of this inventory is the first step toward the goal of carbon neutrality.

Results show that the energy used by buildings is the largest source of greenhouse gases at Tulane, followed by travel for university business, commuting by faculty, staff and students, waste, and, finally, the vehicle fleet. The full report is available for download at <http://green.tulane.edu>

"A greenhouse gas emissions inventory quantifies the impact of our daily activities on climate change," said Liz Davey, Program Manager in the Center for Bioenvironmental Research and Office of Environmental Affairs. "We hope that it will be an educational tool used by the university community, and that it will help prioritize actions that will have the greatest impact."

Tulane must now develop a plan to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. President Cowen has appointed a Climate Commitment Advisory Committee that is reviewing actions the university could take to reduce energy use, shift to renewable energy sources, and foster emissions reductions in the larger community. The plan will be completed this year and submitted to the American College and University

Presidents Climate Commitment by May 2010.

Meanwhile, Tulane continues to support efforts that reduce the university's energy use and environmental impact. New campus construction projects are following the guidance of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building program. The renovation of Dinwiddie Hall, currently underway, will be Tulane's first LEED-certified construction project.

For more information about the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment visit <http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/>