



GREEN MEETINGS

WASHINGTON STATE CONVENTION CENTER



Washington State
Convention Center
at convention place

Green Meetings in the Evergreen State

When you choose Seattle to host your meeting or convention, you're choosing one of the most environmentally progressive cities in the United States. Washington State Convention Center (WSCC) has been an industry leader in conservation and recycling for more than two decades, and is dedicated to environmental building practices and "green" operations.

We continue to reduce our carbon footprint with sustainable culinary practices (such as locally sourced food and beverages) energy-efficient lighting, environment-friendly cleaning products, and a first-rate recycling and composting program. We continue to invest significant resources in new and innovative projects that make the facility even more efficient.

Our long-standing conservation policies, combined with our exceptional beauty and award-winning architecture, ensure that you're making the right decision in bringing your event to Seattle.

WSCC's comprehensive green program substantially reduces the impact of the facility on the environment. All of our employees are committed to providing a dynamic, sustainable meeting experience.



ABOVE: WSCC has been named the Best Green Event Venue in Washington by Northwest Meetings + Events magazine, is listed as one of Washington's Green 50 businesses by Seattle Business magazine, and has earned the "Greenest" designation by the City of Seattle for outstanding achievements in resource conservation.

RIGHT: South Lobby



Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

We are proud to share that The Conference Center, our exceptional 71,000 square foot meeting facility located within the WSCC complex, achieved Silver certification in the U.S. Green Building Council's **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** standards **LEED-CI** (Commercial Interiors) rating system in 2011.

WSCC's original facility predates by five years the establishment of the LEED rating system. We've made significant improvements to WSCC policies and infrastructure, and the facility is currently undergoing evaluation for LEED Existing Building certification. The **LEED for Existing Buildings** Rating System allows WSCC to measure operations, improvements and maintenance on a consistent scale, helping us maximize operational efficiency while minimizing our impact on the environment.



Convention Center Operations

Recycling has been a standard procedure at WSCC since the facility first opened in 1988. This long-term commitment to recycling was recognized by the Washington State Recycling Association with its Recycler of the Year – Public Agency award. The recent \$22 million refurbishment of WSCC required the replacement of 225,000 square feet of carpeting; 95 percent of the materials contained in the replaced carpet were recycled, diverting over 200,000 pounds of waste from the landfill.

Since December 2007, WSCC has contracted with a local composting firm to haul away all food scraps, food-soiled paper and landscape trimmings. This program not only keeps tons of waste out of the landfill, but the composting cycle is uniquely completed by the purchase of clean compost from the same firm for use in WSCC's three acres of indoor and outdoor gardens.

Recycling, composting and trash stations are in place in every meeting room and throughout the public areas for the daily use of guests, with no additional charge to clients. Efforts to educate guests and staff on the importance of sorting recyclables and compostables from trash have been incredibly successful, with WSCC achieving an impressive 70.28 percent diversion rate.

WSCC has substantially reduced water usage with the conversion of all plumbing fixtures to low-flow models –an 80 percent savings in water usage over standard models. Automatic, touchless faucets have also been installed in all restrooms to conserve resources, and our first floor restrooms include Dyson hand dryers, reducing paper towel waste.

With assistance from the City of Seattle's Energy Smart Services Program, several energy conservation measures have been implemented, including an investment

in efficient lighting fixtures to save over 3,000,000 kilowatt-hours in electricity per year. The energy savings is roughly equivalent to the power used by 337 households annually. We have also upgraded our meeting rooms to include new Digital Energy Star certified digital signage packages, incorporating easy-to-read LED lighting.

We now use biodegradable, environmentally friendly chemicals to clean and disinfect glass, fabric and carpet, and surfaces. All are Green Seal certified products and are used for over 80 percent of the building's maintenance needs. Paper towels, facial tissues and toilet rolls all come from recycled sources.

Food Service

Whenever possible, locally sourced sustainable food products are ordered for use by the in-house catering staff. Buying local provides guests with the freshest products, supports regional producers and cuts down on our carbon footprint as shipping distances are greatly reduced. In-season fruits and vegetables come from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California and British Columbia growers. Flour for the on-premise bakery is obtained from no-till farms in eastern Washington. More than 98 percent of the wines served are from Washington's award-winning wineries.

The beef served at WSCC comes from Oregon grain-fed cattle and poultry is raised on free-range Washington farms. Only sustainably harvested seafood not appearing on the Monterey Bay Aquarium Watch List are purchased. All coffee and tea products come from Fair Trade Certified, organic, shade-grown sources.

Our culinary program partners with local biodiesel companies to sell our used cooking oils for the production of biofuels, which not only reduces waste but also helps keep the local water supply healthy and reduces overall dependency on fossil fuels.

All of the contents and packaging of our box lunches are 100 percent compostable. In addition, all disposable food service items (hot and cold cups, plates, cutlery and coffee stir sticks) provided for guests are compostable.

Sales and Marketing

All brochures produced by the sales and marketing department (like this one) are created exclusively in PDF format for electronic distribution. The design of the brochures provides for easy on-screen viewing and all electronic brochures feature both a full color version for viewing and a simplified, "print friendly" version for on-demand printing. Customers requiring paper copies will receive them on recycled paper using an Energy Star-certified, Xerox solid ink printer. Substantially less waste is generated by use of a solid ink printer when compared to a typical color laser printer. For every 100,000 pages, a typical laser printer generates 157 pounds of waste (packaging and expended toner cartridges). The solid ink printer will only produce five pounds of waste per 100,000 pages.



Suppliers

Washington State Convention Center, like much of downtown Seattle, is heated by steam from a plant that uses waste wood as fuel. About 60 percent of this steam energy is created by wood supplied from construction sites, sawmills, factory crates and shipping pallets that would otherwise rot in a landfill. Linen is supplied by a green-certified firm that has won awards for their efforts to reduce waste from their plant. Steam from their operation is recaptured to run the machinery and gray water from the cleaning process is reclaimed, filtered and reused. The company that supplies WSC with fruits and vegetables buys directly from community farmers.

Program Development and Outcomes

Each of the programs outlined here required a great deal of staff involvement and dedication – for example, the composting program took nearly a year to develop. Bringing all departments together for input has made the entire process more effective and, more importantly, has provided a remarkable level of “ownership” to all employees. The development of new systems, procedures, purchasing guidelines and methods to monitor sustainable progress has created a solid strategy for energy and resource management. Water usage and energy consumption have been greatly reduced. Tons of post-event materials are recycled each year and compostable waste is no longer taking up space in landfills.

By investing in a greener facility, Washington State Convention Center is not only reducing its operating costs and saving resources, it enables meeting planners to achieve their goals for delivering sustainable meetings to their clients. Our management continues to upgrade existing procedures and equipment, and as advancements are made in green technologies, we will invest in these improvements and implement them into our daily operations.

Enriching Our Community

A facility the size of WSCC can't help but have an impact on its surroundings. But from the innovative design of the building to the many ways WSCC gives back to the community each day, this impact continues to be a positive one. The unique location of the facility, situated directly above 12 lanes of Interstate highway, reconnected the First Hill and downtown neighborhoods. Despite its size, WSCC was designed to blend into – and not dominate – the community. Besides providing significant economic benefits, the facility was intended to be accessible to all, with many gathering areas that are welcoming and comfortable. Over 100 works of art are on free public display throughout the facility and a regular schedule of rotating exhibitions is presented for the enjoyment of all.

WSCC has also been instrumental in the creation of over 1,300 units of affordable housing as well as the restoration and preservation of several historic buildings. We are now working closely with Visit Seattle to facilitate ‘voluntourism’ opportunities for convention groups looking to make a real difference during their visit.

Our Executive Chef regularly donates his time and expertise to the FareStart program (a culinary job training and placement program for homeless and disadvantaged individuals). In addition, our kitchen regularly donates a significant amount of surplus food to local food banks.

More than just a great place for events, Washington State Convention Center makes important contributions to its community every day.



LEFT: The Convention Center site in 1986. **RIGHT:** As it is today.

Efficient Meetings – Reducing Energy Use and Costs

As the need to conserve energy and reduce emissions becomes ever more important, having conditioned air escape through several large exterior service doors during event move-in/move-out just doesn't make sense – neither economically nor ecologically. Event-level lighting during setup and breakdown is also an unnecessary and costly provision.

A conservative level of lighting in the exhibit halls and ballrooms provides adequate illumination to complete the move-in and move-out process efficiently and safely. Of course, event-level lighting and a comfortable level of heating or cooling is maintained during event hours. Even with conservation procedures in place, Seattle's moderate climate provides a pleasant environment in which to work during move-in and move-out.

Following is a summary of WSCC's energy conservation procedures for heating, cooling, and lighting:

Meeting Rooms and Lobbies

All meeting rooms located on Levels 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, lobbies on Levels 4 and 6, and in the The Conference Center, are provided with an appropriate level of lighting and heating or cooling during times of use. Switches connected to motion sensors turn lights off in these rooms when they are unoccupied.



Exhibit Halls and Ballrooms

Conditioned air is not provided in Exhibit Halls 4ABCDEF or in Ballrooms 6ABCDEF during event move-in/move-out. As necessary, adjustments are made in times of extreme temperatures. Temperatures are considered extreme when they fall below 30 degrees Fahrenheit (-1.1 Celsius) or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32.2 Celsius). To assist in maintaining a comfortable working environment, high-speed, roll-up doors have been installed at all exterior exhibit hall loading entrances.

During move-in/move-out, lighting in Exhibit Halls 4ABCDEF and Ballrooms 6ABCDEF is set to a safe and adequate level that is lower than typical event-level lighting. Clients may request additional heating/cooling and lighting services during move-in/move-out periods and non-event hours. These services are available upon request for an additional fee.

For additional information on conservation procedures and a fee schedule for optional services, please consult your Event Manager.

LEFT: Bright, open spaces create an inviting atmosphere throughout WSCC



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