

Strategy #15 – Actively Pursue the Central College Community Goal “To Promote and Model Appreciation of our Natural Environment and Stewardship of Its Limited Resources”

- A task force of faculty and staff members studied this issue and reported their results in November 2000. They found Central needed to take extensive, concerted actions to begin to model its environmental goal. That report stated:

“A culture of environmental stewardship takes time and deliberate efforts to build and maintain. Central does not yet have such a culture. Without it, changes in Physical Plant or Food Service policies will be shallow and short-lived. Students drive their cars to meals and from class to class. Prime space is given over to parking lots, for which we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, while lamenting the lack of bike racks. We still waste considerable amounts of water, electricity, fossil fuels, paper, plastic, metal, and food daily. We generate tons of solid waste. We apply synthetic herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers, often spreading them well beyond targeted areas.

The first step is to acknowledge our adverse environmental impact. Changing entrenched practices requires the personal commitment and direct involvement of key people responsible for operating Central on a daily basis. A critical mass of faculty, students, staff, and administrators must choose sustainability, conservation, re-use, and recycling in our routine, daily campus tasks.” (Copies of this report are on file in the President’s office, the Library, the Physical Plant Office, the Biology Department, the Chemistry Department, and the Political Science Department.)

- At the same time Central has done a number of things, particularly in recent and current construction projects, in pursuit of this goal.
 - The Carlson-Kuyper Field Station is a model of partnership with the environment.
 - In expanding and renovating the Vermeer Science Center, the college is pursuing a LEED rating (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). If successful this building will be the first academic building in Iowa to be accorded such a rating. As part of this effort, one of the leaders of Central’s physical plant operation successfully completed the requirements to become the first LEED certified professional in the state of Iowa.
 - The college is partnering with the city of Pella to manage periods of high energy consumption by reducing the college’s demands for energy.
- Knowledge and behavior are keys to improving our performance. Accordingly, environmental audits of campus buildings and activities performed by student groups will be reviewed by faculty and staff for appropriate actions. The Budget Committee will devote one meeting each year to exploring ways the college can respond to validated recommendations from these student audits and will find ways to inform and educate students, faculty, and staff about the responses and the expected results.
- SCATE (Students Concerned About the Environment) will be invited to submit recommendations for behavior modification on the part of students, staff, and faculty. The President’s Advisory Committee will choose at least one behavior modification to promote each year and will track and report results to the college community.
- The Administration will explore cooperative arrangements with other colleges and universities to support the environment. The first step in this regard will be to address becoming an institutional endorser of The Talloires Declaration.
- Within the plan period at least one new college fleet vehicle will be an energy efficient “hybrid” vehicle.
- The Academic Planning Committee of the faculty should address the recommendations of the task force for raising the environmental literacy of all Central students.