



PRESS RELEASE

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LCC Board of Trustees Adopt Sustainability Policy

LANSING, MI – When it's time to change a light bulb or install a new lighting fixture anywhere at Lansing Community College – maintenance folks are reaching for the 28-watt bulbs rather than the customary 32-watters. That results in LCC burning less energy.

While that may not sound like much, the college's step-by-step plan to conserve energy is already paying big dividends in its LCC Lives Green program. Adopting energy conservation strategies has become ingrained in LCC's culture –and those efforts will only expand in the coming years as new technologies emerge to better protect the environment.

So when you hear someone say "Go Green!" it may not be coming from cross-town friends at Michigan State University, but rather from proponents of LCC's ongoing efforts to lessen the college's carbon footprint, improve the quality of the air and water and, all the while, becoming more socially conscious.

LCC's energy conservation efforts netted \$335,830 in energy savings in 2010. Viewed another way, harmful CO₂ emissions were decreased by 3.1 million pounds from the year before (2.26 million pounds from electricity conservation and more than 844 pounds from lessening the college's demand for natural gas). That's the equivalent of sparing 9.9 acres of forest; or not burning 7.4 railcars of coal; or having 258 fewer cars clogging our roadways for a year.

During the five-year period of the program, the cumulative saving is nearly \$1.4 million; CO₂ emissions were reduced by 15 million pounds; and it had the effect of preserving 484 acres of forest; or not burning 36.3 railcars of coal; or leaving 1,258 vehicles parked in the garage for a year.

So important is the task at hand that the LCC Board of Trustees on Tuesday, April 26, adopted a college-wide sustainability policy to govern future actions.

Chris Strugar-Fritsch, executive director of LCC's Administrative Services Division, said LCC has taken a number of progressive steps in recent years to conserve energy. For instance, the college has been replacing old-fashioned hot water heating systems – where a large volume of water is heated and then stored in tanks – with an on-demand hot water system that instantly converts steam to hot water, only when needed. That saves both money and energy.

Last year the college invested in a software program that automatically shuts down a computer almost anywhere on campus that is not being used. “We paid for that in six months through savings on electricity costs,” Strugar-Fritsch said.

It's much more than simply flipping off lights in empty rooms. It's about teaching sustainability in the classroom, allowing students to learn the importance of being responsible stewards of the environment.

George Berghorn, dean of LCC's Technical Careers Division, said he's encouraged by LCC's commitment to incorporate sustainability into the academic curricula.

“Some of our nursing students have taken a keen interest in environmental health and air quality and the role they play in helping those suffering from respiratory illness. But they're also interested in the role of healthy air in promoting employee productivity as well as students performance in school,” Berghorn said.

He noted that the vast majority of cars on the road today remain traditional gasoline and diesel powered. But a growing segment of the market is plug-in electric or hybrid vehicles. “We have a responsibility to our students to keep them on the cutting edge of this technology so their skills prepare them for jobs five or 10 years from now,” he said. “The business community in this nation is adopting a more encompassing vision of sustainability that considers the impact to the environment of the new technology, but also considers the broader questions about what are the social and economic considerations of the technology.

“We're asking our students to use a systems approach: Don't just solve the problem in front of you, but what other impacts are there from the decisions you make? It's a real challenge because technology does not stand still.”

About Lansing Community College

Lansing Community College is Michigan's third largest community college with more than 30,000 students attending each year. LCC offers courses in general education for those interested in transferring to a four-year institution, career and workforce development, developmental education and personal enrichment. To meet the

professional development and training needs of regional employees, the college offers customized programs for credit, non-credit and continuing education. The University Center at LCC offers students the opportunity to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from six partner universities on the downtown LCC campus. For more information, visit lcc.edu.