

Environmental Sustainability Policy

1. Policy Purpose

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH) is committed to incorporating ecological, social, and economic criteria into decision-making processes. In this way, VCH has declared Environmental Sustainability to be an organizational priority.

This policy provides the direction and framework for Environmental Sustainability within which supporting protocols and procedures may be developed.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 VCH as an Environmental Leader

- 2.1.1 VCH will act as a leader with respect to environmental stewardship while engaging the healthcare community in a collaborative approach toward Environmental Sustainability.

2.2 Sustainable Operations

- 2.2.1 VCH will work to develop and adopt sustainable best practices and processes within its operations in all departments, including identifying ways to minimize the consumption of non-renewable energy and water resources, as well as solid, organic and hazardous waste products.
- 2.2.2 VCH will work to achieve the legislated green house gas reduction targets contained in relevant provincial legislation (Green House Gas Reductions Targets Act as amended).

2.3 Sustainable Facilities

- 2.3.1 Facilities Management will endeavour to incorporate environmentally-sound techniques for energy and water conservation and space utilization management in decision-making processes.
- 2.3.2 Financial investments will consider quality, cost and sustainability factors. In addition, the long-term life cycle costs of capital will be assessed.

2.4 Sustainable Partnerships

- 2.4.1 Where feasible, partnerships will be pursued with other health organizations, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and businesses to expand capacity and integrate sustainability practices into healthcare operations, initiatives and programs.
- 2.4.2 Partnerships will be strengthened through a commitment to open and transparent decision-making processes that balance economic, social and ecological goals.

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Policy Number: BZ_1500	Section: Business Affairs – Environmental Management		
Original Date: 2011-05-15	Revision Date(s):	Review Date: 2013-05-15	
Issued By: CFO and VP, Systems Development and Performance			
Implementation Site: All VCH sites			Page: 1 of 4

2.5 Executive Leadership are asked to:

2.5.1 Lead the overall organizational commitment to environmental sustainability.

2.5.2 Incorporate environmentally sound practices within decision-making processes, while supporting sustainability through appropriate budget and needs-based planning.

2.6 Facilities Management (specifically the department of Energy and Environmental Sustainability) are asked to:

2.6.1 Promote and develop a sustainability strategy, including strategic energy management plans, which will include measurable targets and action plans.

2.6.2 Facilitate changes in the organization’s operations to enhance sustainability.

2.6.3 Provide expertise and advice to the organization based on evidentiary best practices in sustainability.

2.6.4 Engage with staff to help foster sustainable behaviours across the organization.

2.6.5 Promote sustainability initiatives such as reducing use of materials, conservation of energy and water, recycling of waste and increasing the use of alternative transportation.

2.6.6 Align energy conservation targets to sustainability initiatives.

2.7 Employees are asked to:

2.7.1 Incorporate sustainable policies and procedures into their individual workplaces and decision-making processes.

2.7.2 Help identify and promote new ways of implementing sustainable workplace activities, programs and practices and be role models for fellow employees.

2.8 Compliance

2.8.1 VCH will monitor and measure its Environmental Sustainability efforts and will participate in annual Government wide reporting programs.

3. Policy Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all VCH employees, physicians, volunteers, students, contractors and all others who carry out business for the organization.

4. Policy Principles

4.1 VCH acknowledges the link between a healthy environment and a healthy population.

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Implementation Site: All VCH sites			Page: 2 of 4

4.2 VCH recognizes the importance of minimizing its environmental impact while delivering quality health services

4.3 VCH supports the development of a rigorous and systemic approach to Environmental Sustainability

4.4 VCH's approach to Environmental Sustainability balances ecological, societal and economic considerations.

5. Procedures

5.1 Environmental sustainability considerations will be incorporated into all new and existing procedures.

6. Exceptions

None.

7. Tools, Forms and References

Health Authority Carbon Neutral Action Reports CNAR

Health Authority Strategic Energy Management Plan SEMP

Health Authority Energy Management Assessment EMA

Vancouver Coastal Health Strategic Framework

8. Related Policies

[Hazardous Materials In The Workplace](#)

[Safe & Healthy Workplace](#)

[Waste Management - Methods of Disposal](#)

9. Definitions

Environmental Sustainability means improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems (Brundtland Report, 1987). Within the context of the healthcare system, environmental sustainability means incorporating ecological, social, and economic criteria into decision-making processes.

Staff means all officers, directors, employees, contractors, physicians, health care professionals, students or volunteers engaged by VCH.

10. References

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Implementation Site: All VCH sites			Page: 3 of 4

BC Energy Plan (2009). <http://www.energyplan.gov.bc.ca/>.

Clean Energy Act (2010). http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th2nd/1st_read/gov17-1.htm.

Green House Gas Reduction Targets Act. http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th3rd/1st_read/gov44-1.htm.

Health Authority Carbon Neutral Action Reports (CNAR).
http://www.livesmartbc.ca/government/health_authorities.html.

Provincial Health Services Authority Environmental Sustainability Web Resources.
<http://www.phsa.ca/AboutPHSA/Environmental-Sustainability/Resources/default.htm>.

In original copy:

Issued by:		
Name: <u>Duncan Campbell</u>	Title: <u>CFO, VP Systems Development & Performance</u>	Date: <u>May 15, 2011</u>
Signature of issuing official		

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Implementation Site: All VCH sites		Page: 4 of 4