

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/corrections-gets-greener>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

As Vera explores the intersection of emerging green technologies and prison reentry through the [Ohio Green Prison Project](#), we are encouraged by the National Institute of Corrections recognition of emerging models in a report published earlier this month, *The Greening of Corrections: Creating a Sustainable System*.

[The new report](#) provides an introduction to initiatives on a number of topics relevant in correctional settings: greening physical facilities, creating sustainable work products and services through correctional industries, providing job training for inmates, and promoting an environmental focus through reentry initiatives in the community.

Each chapter provides a number of recommendations, such as the suggestion to use the [Energy Star Portfolio Manager](#) to compare a building's energy performance against those that have similar structural and operating characteristics. The report also gives examples of current, replicable practices, such as these:

These are just a few examples; the 75-page report is full of others. The main takeaway, however, is not just great models. The overarching point is that sustainability in corrections requires a holistic approach: buildings, operations, and programming should all reflect environmental literacy and stewardship. Having an environmentally friendly and energy-efficient facility is an excellent achievement. When an agency has such facilities and other green initiatives such as teaching men and women skills that can help prepare them for jobs in a growing market when they return home, staff, incarcerated individuals, and the community can realize the benefits of a truly sustainable system.

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