



UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAVERHILL

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE 2011-12 Draft Policy

UU Church of Haverhill Earth Stewardship Policy

In keeping with the 7th Principle of Unitarian Universalism, the 2006 UUA Statement of Conscience on the Threat of Global Warming/Climate Change, the 2010 UUA Statement of Conscience on Ethical Eating, and the "Green Revolution Resolution" passed by the UUA at its General Assembly in 2010, the Board of Trustees of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Haverhill, on behalf of its members, covenants to the following earth stewardship policy:

We as a congregation commit to living more sustainably on the earth. As such, we agree to

- be more intentional in our choices and decision-making;
- be willing to learn new behaviors from one another and to learn as an institution from other churches both inside and outside of our association;
- collaborate together as we seek creative and practical solutions to living more sustainably;
- participate in the UUA's continuing work for environmental justice, environmental stewardship, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, and environmental restoration.

With these general goals in mind, we commit to choosing and supporting the most environmentally sound and sustainable practices in our congregational activities, recognizing that the dollars we spend are our votes for the goods and services we buy. We will therefore try to vote mindfully and effectively by buying environmentally sound goods and services and by not buying (i.e. boycotting) less sound ones, realizing too that to do so often means paying more for what could be purchased or done more cheaply.

With this in mind, when it comes to purchasing we will keep in mind the following:

1. Procurement

We will buy and use

- products made of and prepared with renewable resources
- products produced through environmentally friendly processes

- products produced by companies recognized for adherence to environmentally sound business practices
- products made of recycled materials whenever possible, specifically paper that is 100% tree-free and/or 100% recycled (see Appendix A for a list of sources for green purchasing)
- products that are 100% compostable when disposable products are necessary to use due to the size or location of an event

and we will not buy or use products known to be toxic or harmful to the environment, including

- high phosphate detergents
- pesticides, herbicides, insect repellants, and other lawn or garden chemicals
- paints, stains, or building materials containing and/or produced with hazardous chemicals
- cleaning products and polishes containing chlorine or ammonia
- all aerosol containers
- toxic art/craft supplies, including bleached or dyed paper products

2. Investing

We will invest in environmentally and socially responsible funds.

In the same way that the economic choices we make have an impact, our individual and institutional behaviors also have an impact. With this in mind, we will keep in mind the following:

3. Reusables & Recycling

We will recycle all products that are accepted by the Haverhill curbside recycling program including

- glass
- paper
- plastics and styrofoam numbered 1-7
- cans

and we will also recycle other damaging products including

- computer and electronic equipment
- copier and print cartridges
- compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)

and we will strive to recycle food waste by means of

- composting
- the use of worm bins

4. Conservation

We will conserve energy by

- using heating, air conditioning, and lighting only when necessary

- confirming that all lights and appliances are off before leaving the building
- replacing incandescent bulbs with CFLs or LED bulbs wherever possible
- replacing older, less-efficient appliances with more energy-efficient models

and we will conserve water by

- reporting dripping faucets, running toilets, and other plumbing problems to the office
- replacing old toilet fixtures with new low flow models
- harvesting rainwater for outdoor watering needs

5. Ethical Eating

We will strive to be environmentally conscious when planning and serving food, refreshments or snacks at meetings and events by

- choosing locally produced food products (see Appendix B for a list of local vendors)
- limiting inclusion of processed and over-packaged foods
- reducing saturated fats
- handling leftovers responsibly
- using glass, china and cutlery instead of throw-away paper or plastic unless the size or location of the event precludes this
- using fairly traded products when possible (coffee, tea, sugar, chocolate, etc.)

6. Management of Buildings & Grounds

We will manage the UUCH facility and grounds with environmental and social responsibility in mind by

- planting native vegetation and removing invasive alien vegetation
- planning any construction and/or remodeling in compliance with our environmental assessment report
- managing and planning for responsible use of energy, lighting, food, and water
- carbon offsetting whenever possible

In sum, the church will

- work to minimize our impact on the earth in all ways possible
- embrace the spirit of this policy, adapting practices as more knowledge comes to light, in alignment with responsible stewardship practices, reasonable decision-making processes, and avoidance of conflicts with bylaws and previous policies
- be flexible and willing to learn as an institution
- support a reverence for nature, environmental education, and environmentally responsible procurement
- promote and support biodiversity/ecosystem protection and environmental restoration

In order to measure our impact in these areas, church administration will report to the Board in the areas of (a) waste reduction, recycling, and reusability; (b) energy conservation and efficiency; (c) reduction of toxic substances in product procurement; and (d) fair-trade consumption.

In order to better implement these policies, as well as other Green Sanctuary initiatives, the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) encourages--and, when requested, can assist with--communications with church members. The GSC can provide technical assistance to UUCH committees, board liaisons, and others as needed.