

Walton Arts Center's mission is to bring great performing artists from around the world to Northwest Arkansas. As such, we felt we had a unique opportunity to participate in the community dialogue about sustainability - specifically, bringing artist voices into the community conversation about what is happening in the natural world. This initiative was solidified with the launch of *Artosphere: Arkansas' Arts & Nature Festival*. This multi-week accessible arts festival was designed to showcase artists, influenced by nature, who inspire us to live more sustainable lives. The Festival continues to evolve and more fully integrate artists into the sustainability conversation. In addition, as an organization, we have made a commitment to operate in the most sustainable way that we can. As a non-profit, ensuring that we are good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by our donors is critical, and as a major business in town, working to be environmentally friendly is important.

A key strategy in changing and improving some of our business practices to be more sustainable has been the creation of our Sustainability Team. This cross-departmental team is the group that sets our goals, measures our outcomes, and champions the initiatives at all levels of the organization. The team meets every 2-3 months and has representation from every major department. Initiatives include:

- We have upgraded lighting and controls in our facilities, which will reduce our CO2 emissions by over 533 metric tons per year and save an estimated \$53,000 per year on our electricity bills. These savings result in a complete return on investment in less than four years.
- We have initiated policies in our offices and backstage to save money, energy, and resources through simple practices like turning off lights when not needed, adjusting thermostats, and double sided printing. We have implemented standardized daytime temperatures for office spaces.
- We have installed low flow faucets in our public restrooms to reduce faucet water use by 75%.
- We provide our visiting artists and technical crews with reusable water bottles backstage and at off-site events. We worked with a sponsor to also install hydration stations for bottle refilling.
- We redesigned our concessions program to reduce waste and offer greater variety to patrons. Our goals for 2011-2012 include increasing our local, organic and/or fair trade purchases from area restaurants and vendors; a pilot food scrap collection program; and a shift from soda cans to soda fountains utilizing reusable cups to further reduce waste and delivery needs.
- We have placed new recycling bins and signage throughout our campus to make it more convenient for patrons to recycle.
- We have switched to chemical-free cleaning products, environmentally preferable or recycled supplies, and Forest Stewardship Council certified fibers for our tissue products.
- We partnered with AmeriCorps and the National Center for Appropriate Technology to host Dan Dean as our Energy Corps member/Sustainability Coordinator from fall 2010 to fall 2011. Dan's accomplishments included implementation of monthly Lunch & Learn programs for staff and volunteers, a quarterly green e-newsletter, help with Artosphere programming and recognition as a Bicycle Friendly Business and Energy Star Partner.
- We have multiple staff representatives working with the Broadway Green Alliance to create a green certification program to promote greener practices for theaters across the country.