



Greenbuild

2020 Sustainability Report

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Special Thanks to the Greenbuild 2020 Sustainability Report Contributors and Event Partners

CONTRIBUTORS



EVENT PARTNERS



A Message from the Greenbuild Team

Dear Greenbuild Community,

Thank you for your continued support of Greenbuild during this ever-changing year. In January of 2020, Greenbuild was preparing for a blockbuster event in San Diego, California. We had no idea at the time, the extent to which our world was about to change. In the Spring, when it became clear that the effects of COVID-19 would be long-lasting, Informa and USGBC made the conscious decision to deliver the Greenbuild experience virtually. We immediately sprung into action sourcing virtual platforms, technology vendors and curating an education and vendor program that could thrive in an all-digital format.

While the finished product looked a lot different this year, the results were equally impressive! Greenbuild convened thousands of attendees, delivered over 150 education sessions, brought to life cutting edge vendors and sustainable products, and allowed participants to make valuable face-to-face connections, albeit through a screen.

Although virtual events inherently lend themselves to reduced waste, Greenbuild did not take that for granted. The digital landscape offered an opportunity to reimagine our sustainability commitments and we ensured sustainability was at the forefront of everything we did. We offered activities to ensure mindfulness and wellbeing, reduced financial barriers by reducing ticket prices, continued our commitment to the annual scholarship program, and worked with our friends at the San Diego Green Building Council to fund and deliver an impactful Legacy Project, all while delivering more value for our industry.

We invite you to learn more about our sustainability initiatives in the pages that follow. But, most importantly, we hope you, your colleagues and loved ones are safe and healthy and we hope to be able to see you in person later in 2021.

Best Regards,



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About Greenbuild

Greenbuild is the largest annual event for green building professionals worldwide to learn and source cutting edge solutions to improve resilience, sustainability, and quality of life in our buildings, cities, and communities. It's where inspiration ignites, relationships cultivate, knowledge transfers and the leaders developing the next generation of standards, policies, and partnerships gather to turn the promise of a higher living standard into a reality for all.



Greenbuild Sustainability Objectives

Greenbuild operates each year using seven guiding principles, with an overarching goal to always improve from the prior year:

1 Move toward a Zero Waste Event

2 Empower Stakeholders to Drive Change in their Industries

3 Improve Sustainable Sourcing and Procurement

4 Improve Performance and Tracking Methods

5 Reduce Event's Carbon Footprint

6 Positively Impact Communities

7 Lead the Event Industry Through the Advancement of Sustainable Event Management Initiatives

GOAL 1: Move Toward a Zero-Waste Event

Greenbuild's waste management program is historically the cornerstone of the event's sustainability process, with the event achieving TRUE Zero Waste Platinum certification three-years running. Greenbuild seeks to transform typical operations of its venues to achieve lasting improvements in environmental performance and, over the years, Greenbuild has improved its host convention center's annual waste diversion rate by 45% on average since 2013. Without a physical footprint for 2020's event, the Greenbuild team shifted focus to the thousands of living rooms, offices, and homes across the globe that collectively made up the Greenbuild Virtual "venue".

This year, instead of monitoring waste within a convention center, Greenbuild had the opportunity to reach directly into the day-to-day lives of thousands of attendees and leave a lasting impact on their waste habits. To do this, Greenbuild unveiled the [TRUE At-Home Zero-Waste Audit Toolkit](#) - a step-by-step guide for how to assess and audit the waste your household produces and offers tips, a tracking sheet, and resources to help reduce impact and encourage attendee zero waste practices. Although the virtual format prevents Greenbuild from reporting a single, but impressive waste diversion number, distribution and access to this toolkit is the first step for the Greenbuild audience to adopt zero-waste habits in their own homes, achieving a monumental collective impact as a community.



Session Spotlight: The Zero Waste Boardgame!

Greenbuild strives to present innovative approaches to learning through its education program. One of Greenbuild Virtual's most unique and engaging sessions had to do with zero waste **and was ranked in the top quarter of all Greenbuild's education sessions based on overall satisfaction ratings.**

Through the lens of a board game, participants in this session learned how to apply zero waste strategies to an imaginary facility with the goal of maximizing monetary savings and rack up TRUE credits in a set timeframe. The virtual audience had to work together to manage their materials, spend their budget and time wisely, make their operations more efficient, and develop a zero-waste program. Each turn the audience voted to choose an opportunity to make an improvement to their current waste operations. Improvements had different effects on materials, production efficiencies, employee engagement, and budget. By the time the game ends, the facility tries to achieve TRUE Zero Waste certification and stay within budget, or even reduce spend.

Players learned the credits of the TRUE Zero Waste Certification, how they work together to make a facility more efficient, and how to engage different departments to make zero waste a reality.

GOAL 2: Empower Stakeholders to Drive Change in Their Industries

Virtual Sustainability Hub + Pledges

Greenbuild prides itself on its efforts to engage with the community of green building and sustainability professionals and empower them as agents of change. When transitioning to a virtual event format, Greenbuild remained committed to providing a way for attendees to engage with sustainability initiatives like they would if they were on site. And thus, the Greenbuild Virtual Sustainability Hub came to life. This Hub offered ways for the community to engage with Greenbuild's sustainability initiatives including:

- The opportunity to submit virtual pledges for improved behavior and accountability.
- The opportunity to vote on the 2020 event carbon offset project.
- The opportunity to review the Greenbuild Legacy Project, and for local attendees to get involved.
- The opportunity to learn about Greenbuild's Scholarship Program.
- The opportunity to peruse cutting-edge sustainability innovations through a partnership with the Katerva Awards.

This area also served to outline the 2020 Event Goals and highlight 2019 successes, making attendees aware of how they can contribute.

96% of Greenbuild pledges committed to the full spectrum of these sustainability efforts:



Make Your Sustainability Pledge



Vote for a Carbon Offset Project



Review the Greenbuild Legacy Project



Learn About the Greenbuild Scholarship Program



View Sustainable Innovation & Katerva Awards

Green Car Awards

To further embrace the sustainable lifestyle, Greenbuild looked beyond usual partners and into an industry that does its fair share of sustainability work, the automotive industry. The Green Car Journal is a monthly publication that focuses on green vehicles and the environmentally friendly technologies and energy used in them. At the close of Day 1, Greenbuild had the honor of hosting Green Car Journal's 2021 Green Car Awards event. This event honored standout 'green' vehicles in six categories: the Green Car of the Year, the Luxury Green Car of the Year, the Urban Green Car of the Year, the Family Green Car of the Year, the Green SUV of the Year and the Green Truck of the Year. For any Greenbuild attendee or stakeholder looking to further embrace sustainability outside of work, these awards provided great information, and excitement!

GOAL 3: Improve Sustainable Sourcing & Procurement

Greenbuild's materials procurement policies apply strict sustainability requirements to the items, supplies and materials procured for the event. The program urges the organizers to analyze each item to decide if it is necessary to the overall experience, or whether a more sustainable alternative is available. When an item cannot be digitized or eliminated entirely, materials are vetted to ensure they can be reused, recycled, or composted. Although the extensive materials list is largely eliminated for a virtual event, Greenbuild is applying lessons learned in 2020 and looking ahead to when we can meet again in-person.

Greenbuild is dedicated to delivering a safe, hygienic, productive and high quality event experience, while remaining a leader in sustainable tradeshows.

Informa, Greenbuild's parent company, has worked diligently with our industry association partners to create a comprehensive yet thorough best practices guide for all Informa events in 2021. This guide, Informa AllSecure, provides guidelines and recommendations that are divided into four key areas: Physical Distancing, Cleaning & Hygiene, Protect & Detect and Communications. This guide, in conjunction with the hygiene practices implemented by the San Diego Convention Center while housing the homeless during COVID-19, will assist us in creating a successful and safe event in 2021.

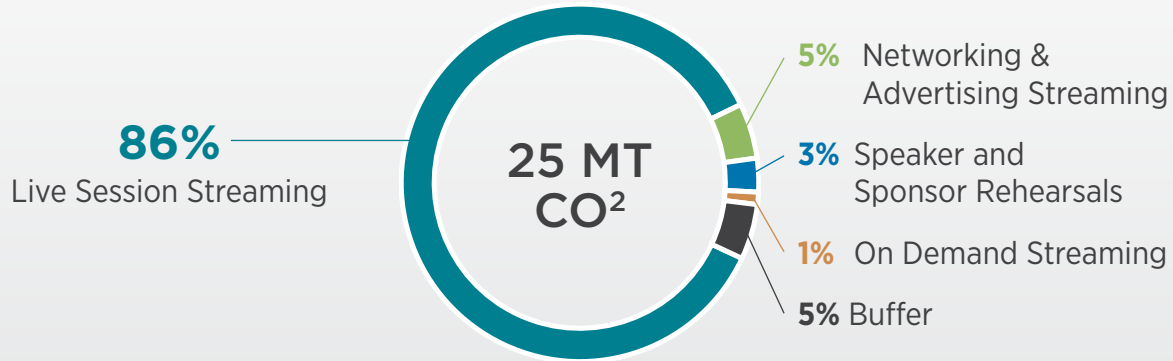
In creating a safe and productive event, Greenbuild's devotion to maintaining our sustainability practices and keeping our zero waste event goal has not wavered. In 2021, Greenbuild will partner with industry specialists to source sustainable cleaning products and PPE to ensure a low carbon and waste footprint for our in-person events. A special thanks to the San Diego Convention Center, and the state of California, for their critical contributions to Greenbuild's plan to return to in-person events in the safest, healthiest, and most environmentally sensitive manner.



GOAL 4: Improve Performance and Tracking Methods

Measuring the Carbon Footprint of a Virtual Event

Using extensive event analytics, Greenbuild was able to monitor exactly how much time each attendee, exhibitor, staff person, and vendor spent engaged in the virtual experience. With that information, Greenbuild and USGBC engaged South Pole to review and offset the emissions associated with the virtual event. These calculations also accounted for emissions related to pre-event functions and event preparation, including speaker rehearsals and sponsor trainings conducted via video conference, virtual networking meetings, technician system testing, YouTube video viewing, and On Demand content consumption to calculate our overall event carbon offset.



There is much variability in calculating carbon emissions in general, and this is especially true for a virtual event. Factors like what device an attendee is using, the local energy mix in each participant's locale, energy used for data transfer, the energy efficiency of the myriad of datacenters involved, and more can all impact the emissions calculation. For Greenbuild Virtual, carbon emissions were calculated based on averages sourced from Greenbuild's registration and usage data, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and CarbonBrief.org. You can learn more about our calculation methodology in Appendix A of this report. As data and research becomes more sophisticated on the emissions and energy usage associated with various digital activities, Greenbuild is committed to improving our digital carbon footprint calculations and using the best available, industry-leading, and credible information.

GOAL 5: Reduce Event's Carbon Footprint

Offsets + Offset Project Voting

Greenbuild has offset 100% of carbon emissions related to the event since its founding in 2002, and that commitment to offsetting the event carbon footprint remains a priority, even in a virtual environment. Greenbuild worked with offset partner, South Pole, one of the leading developers of emissions reduction projects worldwide whose carbon credits are sourced from certified projects, to source high quality, verified offset projects for the virtual event.

This year, the Greenbuild community engaged in the Virtual Sustainability Hub to vote on their ideal project that offset the event's digital footprint while positively impacting a community in need. A selection of five South Pole projects was presented for participants to vote on and ranged from renewable energy capacity building, to clean cookstoves, to reforestation projects.

The Greenbuild community voted overwhelmingly for Safe Community Water Supply in Rwanda. This project restores and repairs existing boreholes to provide clean drinking water to Rwandan communities, removing the need to boil water for purification. The project's benefits include decreased greenhouse gas emissions from burning wood, lessens deforestation pressures on surrounding forests, provides a reliable source of clean water, prevents water-borne disease, and frees up families' resources from collecting or purchasing firewood so children are more able to attend school and study and other family members can take part in other income-generating activities, household tasks or spending time with the community.

Greenbuild offset the equivalent of **25 metric tonnes of carbon emissions**, which will benefit these communities in Rwanda, providing not only an equivalent reduction in emissions, but social and community benefits.



60% Safe Community Water Supply: Rwanda



14% Velafrica: Ghana



11% EcoAustralia: Australia



10% Cookstoves for Maasai Communities: Kenya



8% Prony Wind Power: New Caledonia

GOAL 6: Positively Impact Communities

Legacy Project

Despite becoming a virtual event in 2020, Greenbuild committed to funding its original-selected Legacy Project in San Diego. The Project was an outdoor garden Master Plan, designing a multi-purpose outdoor classroom and growing space for a local food security and nutrition education non-profit serving the San Diego region.

This legacy project responded to the need for healthy food education, social equity and accessibility. Olivewood Gardens and Learning Center's historic 7.85-acre property in National City, California serves as an inclusive and Daytime Rendering interactive, indoor-

outdoor classroom for San Diegans of South Bay. Driven by the desire to build healthy families in their local region, they offer science-based nutritional education, hands-on gardening lessons, cooking classes, and leadership development programs for youth and adults.

Despite some delays related to COVID-19, the Greenbuild Legacy Project was able to make progress during two on-site work weekends in October 2020. The Legacy Project Committee worked with Olivewood Gardens & Learning Center to put safety protocols in place including temperature checks, mask enforcement, hand sanitizer stations, and plenty of outdoor workspace. During these two weekends, the committee was able to pull together volunteers, including a troupe



of dedicated eco-rotary members, to clear out the site through pulling weeds, level the ground, lay mulch, and clear debris. In addition to site preparation, a skilled team of volunteers were able to build a table and benches from salvaged urban timber provided by Lumbercycle, erect shade sails to prep the blueberry garden, and install a rainwater catchment tank to provide a sustainable water source for the gardens.

In total, Greenbuild was able to contribute over \$11,000 to the project, in addition to significant volunteer time. The project committee is also planning additional work days in 2021, provided they are able to do it safely and efficiently.

Virtual Scholarships

Greenbuild & USGBC combine forces each year to ensure that Greenbuild is accessible to as many people as possible. By going virtual in 2020, the travel costs that often prohibit many people from attending large annual events, were immediately removed, reducing one barrier to attendance from the outset.

Greenbuild awarded over 40 scholarships in a competitive process to make the experience accessible to those who could not otherwise afford its fees. This is a key component of UGSBC's equity strategy and a program Greenbuild is proud to deliver each year.

GOAL 7: Lead the Event Industry Through the Advancement of Sustainable Event Management Initiatives

Speaker Diversity Accomplishments

As an industry-leading thought leadership platform for the sustainability and green building movements, representation of diverse voices is an important and evolving priority for Greenbuild. And we approach this with humility, recognizing there is always progress to be made.

In 2019, at Greenbuild Atlanta, the event boasted a 50/50 split between male and female keynote speakers, and 62% were persons of color. Greenbuild remained committed to achieving similar levels of representation in 2020. Greenbuild Virtual and its three associated Summits featured 18 inspiring marquee speakers and panelists, half of whom are female, one who is a transgender woman, and over half who are persons of color.

As we continue to make strides, Greenbuild is dedicated to ensuring equitable representation in other aspects of the event as well, including the rest of the Greenbuild education program and we look forward to a continued dialogue as we strive for an event that makes everyone feel welcome.

A Small Sampling of Speakers



Christiana Figueres
Executive Secretary, UNFCCC
2010-2016
Facilitator of the historic
Paris Climate Agreement
Founding Partner, Global
Optimism



Mahesh Ramanujam
President and CEO
USGBC, GBCI and Arc



Garry Cooper, Jr., PhD
Chief Executive Officer/Co-
founder, Rheaply



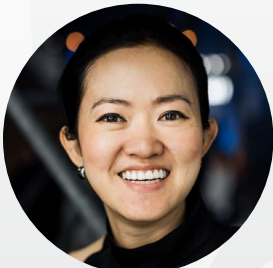
Sarah Pajji Yoo
CEO and Co-Founder,
Blueland



Dr. Paula Stone Williams
Internationally known
speaker on gender equity,
LGBTQ advocacy and human
understanding



Jeff Benavides
Chief Sustainability and
Resilience Officer, Orange
County, Florida



Kotchakorn Voraakhom
CEO and Founder
LANDPROCESS / Porous City



Michael Murphy
Founding Principal and
Executive Director,
MASS Design Group

Looking Ahead... San Diego 2021

San Diego has long been a city at the forefront of Sustainability. In 2015, the City Council approved San Diego's Climate Action Plan, which calls for the City to cut half of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035. The Climate Action Plan's strategies include 100 percent renewable electricity; water and energy efficiency; zero waste; bicycling, walking, transit and land use; and resiliency measures, all topics that directly relate to Greenbuild! And in 2018 San Diego County achieved a Platinum LEED for Community certification.

Additionally, the San Diego Convention Center was awarded LEED Gold certification in 2017 driven by their unwavering commitment to sustainable operations and management through initiatives such as:

- Diverting a record 79 percent of materials or 3,162 tons.
- Replacing their old fluorescent lights with 11,650 energy-efficient LED's in the exhibit hall, meetings rooms and offices.
- Renovating 98 percent of all restrooms to low-flow water usage, helping reduce indoor water usage by 32 percent
- Recycling 100 percent of all cardboard, thanks to two cardboard balers.
- Removing garbage disposals in the convention center kitchens and donating all food scraps to local gardeners who compost them.
- Donating all untouched food that hasn't spoiled to the San Diego Rescue Mission

Greenbuild is thrilled to be heading to San Diego where we can even further supplement these initiatives to run the most sustainable Greenbuild yet!

SAVE THE DATES! GREENBUILD • SEPTEMBER 21-23, 2021 • SAN DIEGO



**Information provided by SanDiego.gov and VisitSanDiego.com*

Appendices

Appendix A – Historical Performance Data + Reported Data Boundary and Quantification Methods

Live Session Streaming Emissions Calculations	0.8 kWh x 38,148 total streaming hours = 30,518.4 kWh	30,518.4 kWh x .000707MT CO ² = 21.58 MT CO²
Networking & Advertising Streaming Emissions Calculations	0.8 kWh x 2,074 total meeting & YouTube hours = 1,659 kWh	1,659 kWh x .000707MT CO ² = 1.2MT CO²
Speaker and Sponsor Technical Rehearsals Emissions Calculations	0.8 kWh x 1,428 rehearsal hours = 1,142.4 kWh	1,142.4 kWh x .000707 MT CO ² = 0.81 MT CO²
On Demand (OD) Streaming Emissions Calculations	0.8 kWh x 402 total OD hours = 321.60 kWh	321.60 kWh x .000707MT CO ² = 0.23MT CO²
		Total Carbon Emissions: 23.82 MT CO²

Sources:

- 0.8 kWh of electricity for one hour of video streaming = Energy Use and Carbon Emissions from Streaming Video: CarbonBrief.org, updated 2020 - metric used for streaming live and on-demand content, as well as for videoconferencing.
- approx. 0.000707 MT CO² per kwh = US average electricity source emissions: U.S. EPA's GHG Equivalencies Calculator*

*Notes: This calculation does not include any greenhouse gases other than CO².