



Greenbuild

2023 Sustainability Report

CARBON OFFSET SPONSOR





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A Message From the Greenbuild Team

To our extended Greenbuild family,

Thank you for your continued support of the Greenbuild International Conference + Expo. We were thrilled to gather in person again at our trademark event held at the Walter E. Convention Center in Washington, DC. We welcomed thousands of industry professionals to celebrate USGBC's 30th Anniversary and continue our mission of improving resilience, sustainability, and quality of life in our buildings, cities, and communities.

Throughout the course of the week, Greenbuild offered:

- Over 150 live conference sessions with over 500 industry speakers. Many sessions were live-streamed directly from Washington, DC, with recordings available after the show.
- 3 brand-new virtual Summits covering nature-based solutions, net-zero, and innovation.
- Daily keynotes featuring Kal Penn, Ali Zaidi, and Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, showcasing a dynamic, powerful mix of industry voices.
- Over 250 exhibitors and brands on the Expo Floor, including a co-location with the Industrialized Wood Based Construction Conference, now known as MassTimber+.
- Countless special events, including the Greenbuild Gala celebrating USGBC's 30th Anniversary at the LEED Platinum National Museum of African American History & Culture.
- 20 Tours of local, industry-leading sustainability projects in the Washington, DC, area
- Wellness activities, including a LEED Plaque run with the Greenbuild Run/Walk club, daily complimentary yoga classes, and a prayer and meditation room.
- Volunteer activities from the show floor, which allowed Greenbuild attendees to participate in local community development projects.

Greenbuild, in collaboration with the Host Committee, also provided funding for a 2023 Legacy Project, which focused on Gensler's Roots to Success initiative at Kelly Miller Middle School, which was dedicated to positively impacting the Washington, DC, community.

We invite you to read the entire 2023 Sustainability Report in the pages that follow, and we look forward to seeing you November 12-15, 2024, in Philadelphia, PA.

Best Regards,



Sherida Sessa
Brand Director
Greenbuild



Britt Jackman
Director, Education & Events
U.S. Green Building Council



FASTER *FORWARD* to a Sustainable Future

Informa, the parent company that produces the Greenbuild International Conference + Expo, has a company goal to embed sustainability into everything they do. The Faster Forward framework seeks the following:



Faster to Zero

Become a zero waste and net zero carbon business. This means taking accelerated steps to reduce our carbon and waste footprint with the aim of becoming a zero waste and net zero carbon business by 2030.



Sustainability Inside

Connect people with knowledge and embed sustainability inside every brand.



Impact Multiplier

Create positive impact, help people connect more efficiently and invest in communities.



[MORE DETAILS HERE](#)



2023 Highlights By the Numbers



of waste diverted from landfill through composting, recycling, donation, and reuse



plastic-free show catering



of speakers self-identified as women



of education session tracks focused on a sustainable future



of fresh food was sourced locally
(from within 250 mile radius)



of unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions were offset



Our Long-Term Sustainability Goals and Legacy



In an era where environmental consciousness and responsible business practices are at the forefront of global priorities, long-term sustainability goals are the cornerstone for our organization to make progress. Long-term sustainability goals encapsulate a commitment to practices that balance economic growth with social and environmental responsibility. These goals go beyond immediate annual gains and aim to create enduring positive impacts well beyond the close of the show. As we navigate the challenges of the 21st century, Greenbuild continues to pursue long-term sustainability goals, recognizing their role in shaping a healthy future and positioning sustainability as a fundamental guiding principle for progress.

Greenbuild's Long-term Sustainability Goals

- 1** Produce a Zero Waste Event
- 2** Empower Stakeholders to Drive Change in Their Industries
- 3** Improve Sustainable Sourcing and Procurement
- 4** Incorporate Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing through All Event Strategies
- 5** Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 6** Positively Impact Communities
- 7** Lead the Events Industry Through the Advancement of Sustainable Event Management Initiatives



Waste Management



Greenbuild Conference and Expo travels to a new venue each year and is successful at maintaining a result-driven waste strategy at each host destination. This is achieved through long-term vendor relationships, including sustainability parameters in RFPs and contract addendums, dedicated partners, and yearlong conversations with our supplier teams leading up to the conference.

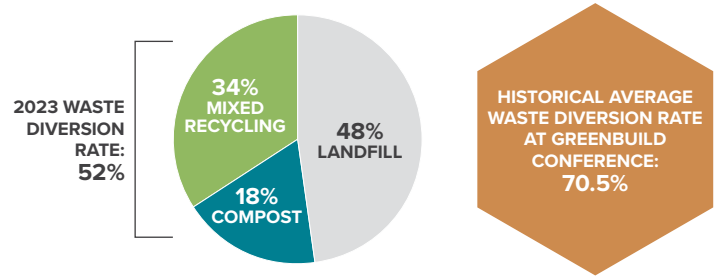
No matter our location, our partners are an integral piece of successful waste management. The Walter E Washington Convention Center has established a long-running and successful waste management operation. They use a consistent color-coded system both front of house and back of house, with the option of extra back-of-house waste sorting support for events that request it. Every stakeholder, from cleaning crews to attendees, understood how to dispose of items correctly.

However, things don't always go as planned. Even with all our conversations and eyes on what feels like every piece of waste, we believe there was a mix up in landfill and recycle waste by the haulers. The data we got back showed that we had more landfill by a large margin, which we know is not accurate because we saw all the waste sorted out onsite.

Our best guess is that the very tight move in schedule of Greenbuild, backed up with another very large event prior, meant that some of that show's waste was accounted to Greenbuild by the haulers in their reports.

While it is disappointing to get these numbers back, especially after being so diligent, we know we have work to do on our engagement.

Greenbuild has previously partnered with GBCI to audit all TRUE practices onsite at the event and has assisted in determining opportunities for additional credits at Greenbuild events.



Our waste program wouldn't be as successful as it is without the support of our volunteers! USBGC trains all volunteers on the unique waste systems at each venue and preps them on the end-of-life options for products they can expect to see on the show floor. This helps them direct event attendees to the correct bin for the first step of waste disposal. Volunteers help us avoid bigger problems down the line by ensuring waste streams avoid contamination, making it easier for back of house teams to get items in the right compactors.



Stakeholder Engagement and Education

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED



Making sustainability more accessible hinges on engagement. On site, Greenbuild builds experiences to actively involve and educate all our stakeholders on how each can contribute to a more sustainable future in the events industry.

100% of exhibitors participated in the GMEGG (Greenbuild Mandatory Exhibitor Greening Guidelines) in 2023. Every year outstanding achievement in procurement and design are awarded to exhibitors who excel at meeting or exceeding GMEGG requirements.



Introducing Greenbuild's 2023 GMEGG Winners!

(Left to right):

- Pennsylvania Hardwoods
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
- Building Materials Reuse Association

Always striving to improve our sustainability efforts, USBGC, Informa, and Honeycomb Strategies collaborated to introduce an online training module for exhibitors. This initiative serves as an educational platform to showcase innovations and the latest best practices for sustainable tradeshows. The training module provided exhibitors with opportunities to explore examples and case studies related to sustainable booth construction, the use of environmentally preferable materials, optimal product selection, efficient shipping management, and the promotion of reuse—all aligned with the GMEGG requirements. The results of this initiative have demonstrated improvements in sustainable practices that we can be exemplary resource for other events within the industry.

100% of our hotel partners participated in the Greenbuild Hotel Sustainability Survey. This survey features 35 questions covering impact areas such as energy and water conservation, waste management, green cleaning practices, and staff involvement. The survey results are accessible on Greenbuild's hotel booking web page; the transparency empowers show visitors to make informed decisions about lodging, supporting our shared commitment to sustainability.

The Greenbuild Behind the Scenes Sustainability Tour offers an opportunity for planners, event vendors, and attendees to delve into the sustainable practices on site. This experience provides insight into the operations of our host partners, highlights the proactive measures taken by our event planning team, and showcases the impactful modifications implemented to ensure the event is as environmentally conscious as possible. It serves as a platform for our host partners to spotlight their best practices in sustainable event management as well.



Sustainable Sourcing and Procurement

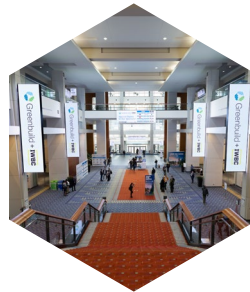
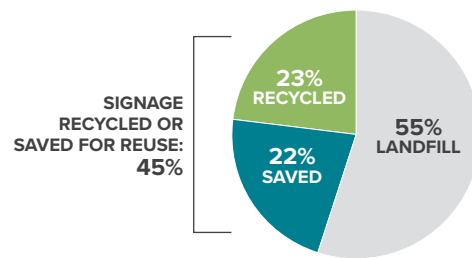
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED



Sustainable procurement choices significantly influence the downstream impact. Across the event the planning team opts for eco-friendly and ethically sourced goods. This approach consistently reduces the environmental footprint, minimizes waste, and fosters resource conservation throughout the supply chain at Greenbuild.

- 57% of all fresh food items were sourced locally
- Single-use plastic serveware and beverage packaging are banned at the event
- The team opts for all aluminum beverage containers wherever possible

Over the years, materials for booth builds and signage have evolved to become more sustainable, not only in their manufacture, but also their lighter weight, reducing carbon emissions from transport. This year, Greenbuild opted to take advantage of digital signage at the Walter E. Washington Convention center, eliminating some printing needs altogether. One large digital sign can display more information than printed signage, creates an awesome look and feel, and can also be updated at a moment's notice.



About 86% percent of the carpet used for Greenbuild had already been used for other events. Aisle carpet has been absent at this event for over three years. Of the remaining carpet, 81% of the carpet used in booths by exhibitors or other small activation areas was saved for reuse on future shows.

Opportunity for improvement: Even when we are diligent, things can slip through the cracks. A standard material that commonly covers table-tops in the expo hall is a single-use, soft PVC material, which is recyclable. In the past, we swapped this material for a compostable product, but we missed the opportunity to order it in time for the event this year.

We also swapped out hard-sided signage substrates for a lightweight fabric material. While it can reduce emissions as it's lighter to ship, this fabric can only be used once. In 2024 we plan to do a deep dive with our partners to review substrates and improve design to increase reuse and identify more sustainable end-of-use options.





Water and Energy Impacts

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



Since 2016, Greenbuild has restored over 30 million gallons of water through the purchase of Water Restoration Credits (WRCs). WRCs are third party verified credits that directly enact change by funding projects that help secure legal agreements that protect water to ensure environmental and social benefits. They provide cleaner, more abundant water and improve habitat in meadows, wetlands, and rivers. They also help cities and farms use water more efficiently by modernizing outdated systems.

The Greenbuild planning team has been able to reduce the water footprint of the event over the years by eliminating paper products onsite, changing menus to favor local and veggie-forward meals, and through innovations used at LEED certified venues, where water-efficient technologies and reclamation practices keep water consumption at a minimum at the host venue.

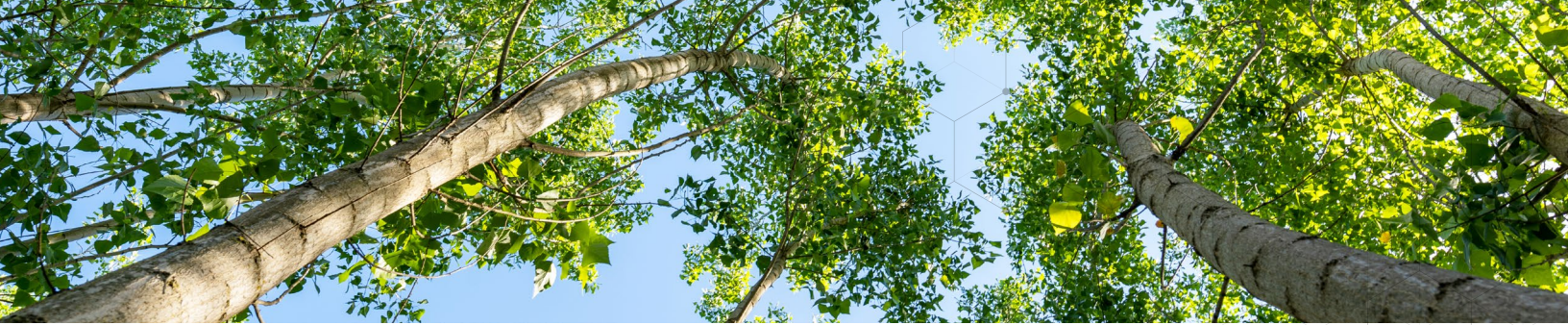
WATER FOOTPRINT

Fresh Food – Total water use (Gal)	688,534
Printed Materials – Total water use (Gal)	-
Fuel – Total water use (GS freight and shuttle fuel) (Gal)	5,992
Hotels – Total water use fro occupied hotel room night (Gal)	641,932
Venue – Total water use from primary venue (Gal)	132,073
Total Water Footprint (Gal)	1,468,531
Water Restoration Credits Purchased (%)	100%

53% of the 101,609 kWh of energy consumed at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center came from renewable sources. Low emission glass throughout the building minimizes temperature fluctuations that require bursts of high-energy HVAC use, and sensor-controlled high efficiency lighting throughout the building lowers energy use in areas of the building that aren't occupied.



The Walter E. Washington Convention Center achieved LEED Gold certification in preparation to host Greenbuild, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to sustainability. The LEED certification acknowledges the implementation of innovative and sustainable strategies in the building's design, construction, and operations. This achievement not only showcases the convention center's leadership in green initiatives but also sets a positive example for similar venues, emphasizing the importance of eco-friendly practices within the conference and events industry.



Reduce Carbon Emissions

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED



Since its inception, Greenbuild Conference and Expo has tracked carbon emissions related to event activities. Methodologies have evolved over the years and our sophistication in tracking emissions has improved. The planning team has remained committed to reduction strategies and offsetting 100% of event related emissions for over 20 years.

While we understand emissions from travel to the event are unavoidable, the team continues to make progress on reduction, working with all event partners and vendors on ways to minimize the carbon emissions related to producing the event. Informa is a founding signatory of the Net Zero Carbon Events Initiative and the Greenbuild team, by extension, will always seek opportunities to reduce our impacts. Areas where we know we can improve transportation within the host destination such as finding incentives for our attendees to use mass transit while onsite and working with our partners to source renewable energy and sustainable products.

SUMMARY	CARBON IMPACT (MT CO2e)
Total Event Carbon Footprint	4,030.66
ATTENDEE TRAVEL & HOTEL	
Attendee travel	3,317.34
Hotel stays	296.11
STAFF TRAVEL & HOTEL + VENUE ELECTICITY	
Event team travel to event	10.73
Hotel Night Info	2.90
Venue electricity use	37.37
ON SITE EMISSIONS	
Disposable Stands	7.22
Gas use by venue	0.52
Fork lift trucks	1.28
Composted Waste	0.02
Landfill Waste	0.84
Carpet waste	0.00
Logistics - General Service Contractors	19.21
Logistics - Exhibitors	126.98
Signage waste	1.38
Organiser catering	208.79



Carbon Neutral Certification

This is our second year achieving CarbonNeutral® Certification status under the CarbonNeutral Protocol. Greenbuild goes through a rigorous assessment and a third-party audit of all sources of carbon emissions.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to encourage attendees to take public transit, many of our city building tours this year used the Washington, DC, Metro to take attendees to the stops on their tours, eliminated the need for shuttles.





Positively Impact Communities

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED



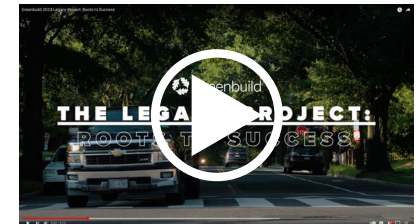
The Greenbuild Sustainability Hub has been a permanent and prominent fixture of the show for the last 10 years. It has evolved over the time, but it has always been a place where people gather to share their commitment to improving the local community. This year, we offered a few community service projects that served needs in the DC area.

Participants boxed 3,000 pounds of fresh organic vegetables from Lancaster Fresh Farm Co-Op (LFFC) to donate to local families. LFFC represents over 100 member farms in the Northeast that offers farmers the opportunity to coordinate as both growers and decision-makers. Food was donated through Biz Markie's Just a Friend Foundation to families in Baltimore. Just a Friend Foundation provides support and resources to children in the foster care system and those experiencing food deprivation.



The Legacy Continues...

The Greenbuild Legacy Project is integral to each Greenbuild International Conference and Expo. This year the project was focused on Gensler's "Roots to Success" initiative at Kelly Miller Middle School. Positioned in Washington, D.C.'s Ward 7, the school serves a diverse student body, including many from resource-limited families situated in a local food desert. The project targets impactful enhancements to address these challenges, creating a space at the school that will provide a hands-on learning experience, educating students about the benefits of sustainable farming and organic gardening practices while enriching the science curriculum across all academic levels.



Connecting the Disconnected

Creating access and connecting the disconnected is key program at an Informa to connect those who may have struggled to access networks, markets, products, or education provided at events. To improve access, Greenbuild offered 62 scholarships for onsite and virtual access for these groups to attend.



Each year the **Women In Green** is a luncheon that honors the women in professional careers in the green building industry and the incredible impact they have as professionals.

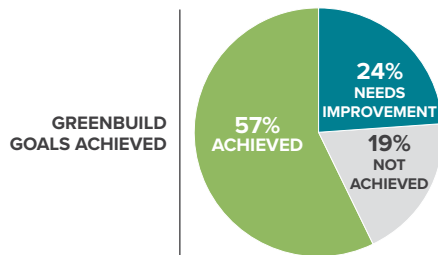


Advancing Sustainable Event Production and Management

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVED



The Greenbuild Conference and Expo prides itself on innovation and inclusion, co-locating with events and investing in new strategies to reduce the environmental impact of the event, while at the same time striving to reach more people and leave a positive lasting impact on the communities we visit. While our long-term sustainability goals remain, each year the team identifies specific annual objects, specific to the challenges of the year to always leave our host destination better than when we arrived.



The Informa Accelerator

Through the *Accelerator* program, the sustainability team works closely each year with a number of events that have been identified as key priorities for accelerated sustainability progress.

At the heart of this is the *Accelerator* framework which outlines the **main considerations** for a sustainable event.

It has been designed to guide and provide events with the space to **track their progress**, identify the sustainability **priorities right for them**, to work towards achieving our *Faster Forward* commitments by 2025, and to inspire **pioneering** ideas and initiatives.

Since the founding of this program at Informa, Greenbuild has been the leading scorer of the Accelerator Program across the entire Informa portfolio of events and given special designation status as Pioneer. We are honoured to hold this title and our team; our partners and stakeholders are all committed to continued innovation and improvement of our sustainability bottom line.



Appendix

I. Greenbuild KPI

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY DATA		2023
Destination	Washington DC	
Main Venue	Walter E. Washington Convention Center	
Participants (#)	5,963	
In-Person Participants (#)	5,536	
Virtual Participants (#)	1,634	
Total number of exhibiting companies	243	
Exhibit (sqft)	39,735	
Occupied hotel room nights	5,434	

MAIN VENUE IMPACTS	
Energy Use (kWh)	101,609
Renewable Energy Use (%)	53%
Water Use (gal)	136,080
Natural Gas Use (therms)	97
Waste Per Participant (lb)	3.58
Waste Per Sqft Exhibit Space (lb)	0.54
Waste Diversion (%)	52%
Waste Diversion Over Baseline (%)	36%
Total Waste Generated (US Ton)	10.66
Total Waste Generated (lbs)	21,080
Total Recycling (lbs)	7,120
Total Compost (lbs)	3,800
Total Landfill (lbs)	10,160
Local fresh food (<100 miles) (% by weight)	57%
Regional fresh food (<500 miles) (% by weight)	15%

CARBON - IMPACT	
Total Carbon Footprint (MTCO ₂ e)	4030.66
Carbon Emissions Per Participant (MTCO ₂)	.675
Total Emissions Offset (%)	100%

PERFORMANCE	
Signage Produced (sqft)	14,599
Signage Returned to Inventory (%)	21%
Sustainable Signage Sourced (%)	23%
Digital Signs Used (#)	17
Paper Used (sheets 8.5 x 11 equivalent)	No printed material
Exhibitors - GMEGG participation (%)	87%
Exhibitors - GMEGG compliance (%)	100%
AV - ENERGY STAR (Laptops, Projectors, Monitors)	0
AV - Energy Efficient (All Equipment)	20%
LEED-Certified Venue Partners (#)	2
Hotels - Walking Distance (1 mi) (%)	100%
Hotels - Amenity Donation (%)	57%
Hotels - In-room Recycling 2-streams (%)	93%
Hotels - Kitchen Composting (%)	85%
Hotels - No Auto Newspaper Delivery (%)	85%
Hotels - Green Cleaning Products (%)	57%
Hotels - Housekeeping incentive Program (%)	43%
Hotel - Survey Response Rate	100%

WATER FOOTPRINT	
Food-Total water use (Gal)	688,534
Paper- Total water use (Gal)	-
Fuel - Total water use (GS freight and shuttle fuel) (Gal)	5,992
Hotels- Total water use from occupied hotel room night (Gal)	641,932
Venue-Total water use from primary venue (Gal)	
Total Water Footprint (Gal)	1,336,458
Water Restoration Credits Purchased (%)	100%

WELLNESS/DIVERSITY/INCLUSION/ENGAGEMENT	
# of scholarship recipients	62
Women speakers (% of total)	43%
People of color (responded being non-white) (% of total)	18%

Appendix

II. Sustainable Development Goals

Since 2021 Greenbuild has been tracking our actions against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals. These are a set of 17 integrated and interrelated goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030. Reporting on the SDGs is an important step for trade shows and events to communicate their commitment to the achievement of these Global Goals; claiming accountability and responsibility to take the necessary actions; and measuring progress over time. We are proud that Greenbuild can support almost all the Sustainable Development Goals.

III. Sustainability Partners



FREEMAN®



WALTER E. WASHINGTON
CONVENTION CENTER

plant matter
nature's aesthetic

IV. Data Management Boundaries and Quantifications

This section provides additional details pertaining to boundaries and calculation methods used to arrive at our reported performance results.

ENERGY USE

The energy boundary consists of energy consumed during Greenbuild events and corresponding move-in/move-out periods at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

- For the convention center, total energy consumption (purchased electricity, fuel burning for heating and cooling) during Greenbuild move in, event and move-in/out days was reported through manual meter readings.
- The total energy consumption for the entire period was assumed to be all attributed to the Greenbuild event.
- Energy use from hotel accommodations, fuel burning from participant travel to/from the destination, and mobile fuels from other vehicles operated by the venues or third parties were not included in the energy footprint (but were included in the GHG emissions calculations).

WATER USE

The water boundary consists of water consumed at the main venues (convention center during the event and corresponding move-in/move-out periods).

- For the convention center, total water consumption during Greenbuild move in, event and move-in/out days was reported through manual meter readings.

Boundary Considerations

- Water data include district potable water consumption only.
- Water data only includes the operational water footprint and does not include virtual water content of processes involved in the materials and supplies used or consumed during the event.

Water Footprint Considerations

The water footprint boundary consists of water consumed, both direct and indirect from the following source and/or products: Walter E. Washington Convention Center water consumption for the duration of Greenbuild 2023, whole food items procured for Greenbuild 2023, Freeman freight fuel consumption, Paper procured for Greenbuild 2023, and average water consumption for occupied hotel room nights. All figures are reported in gallons.

- Direct water consumption is defined by the actual water consumed by individuals through various avenues including water infrastructure systems. Indirect water consumption is defined as the summation of all water footprints consumed to produce a final product.

Appendix

Water Footprint Calculations

The following details the measurements in the water footprint.

1. Walter E. Washington Convention Center– total water consumption during Greenbuild move in, event and move-in/out days was reported through manual meter readings.
2. Freeman freight fuel – based on total gallons of water consumed to produce total gallons of gasoline consumed (Water Intensity of Transportation).
3. Paper – based on total gallons of water used to produce total pounds of coated groundwood paper consumed for Greenbuild 2022 (Environmental Paper Network).
4. Hotels – based on average hotel water usage per occupied room (L) in Washington D.C. (Cornell Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking Index 2019: Energy, Water, Carbon).

WASTE CALCULATIONS

The waste boundary consists of waste generated at the main venues (convention center and celebration venue) during the event and corresponding move-in/move-out periods.

Convention center back-of-house waste streams measured and tracked included:

1. Composted material –weight as reported by hauler.
2. Comingle Recycling (Plastic/Aluminum/Glass) – scale weight of compactor as reported by hauler
3. Cardboard – scale weight of compactor as reported by hauler
4. Donated Food – No food was donated from the kitchens.
5. Donated Items – No items were reported donated.
6. Landfill – Scale weight of compactor as reported by hauler.

Boundary Considerations

- Upstream waste not disposed of onsite is not included.
- Waste generated from hotels, or other vendors offsite, is not included.

BASE APPROACH TO ALL METHODOLOGIES

CO2 equivalents (CO2e)

According to the Kyoto Protocol, there are seven primary greenhouse gasses that are contributing to climate change.

These are: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃).

All of these greenhouse gasses have different intensities of effect on the climate. To create a more accessible and usable final number, we combine these effects to produce an overall number of equivalent CO₂ (CO₂e).

Carbon from infrastructure construction

We have yet to see a methodology that accounts for the substantial carbon released during infrastructure construction. This is extremely disappointing, since airports, rail tunnels, highways, and ports are some of the largest infrastructure projects on the planet, and their carbon should be divided amongst users of that infrastructure. In future methodologies, we hope to account for this deficit.

Using correct annual underlying methodologies

Many underlying methodologies that Thrust Carbon relies upon are published on an annual basis. Where this occurs, Thrust Carbon will use the most appropriate annual methodology. For example, for 2019 travel calculations, Thrust Carbon may apply the 2019 DEFRA methodology.

Annual methodologies are typically published midway through the calendar year, so we highly recommend clients rebaseline and recalculate their emissions before publicly reporting their emissions to ensure the latest and most up-to-date emissions factors are used (see the philosophies of Thrust Carbon section).

It is worth noting that newer does not always equal better for carbon methodologies. Annual methodologies are typically based on the variable factors for that year's carbon calculation (e.g. that year's renewable vs. non-renewable energy mix), so for example, a 2019 methodology is not necessarily better than a 2018 methodology.

Methodologies we use

Thrust Carbon builds upon multiple base methodologies, and will apply the most appropriate methodology given the data provided. These base methodologies are (in order of preference):

1. DEFRA Fuel methodology
 - a. Used when the direct fuel burn is known (e.g. for a charter flight)
2. ICAO
 - a. Used when the aircraft type is known
3. DEFRA Aviation methodology
 - a. Used when the flown distance is known
4. Spend methodology
 - a. Used when only spend data is known