



2025

Carbon Neutral Action Report

Okanagan College





2024 PSO Climate Change Accountability Report

Okanagan College

PART 1. Legislative Reporting Requirements

Declaration Statement:

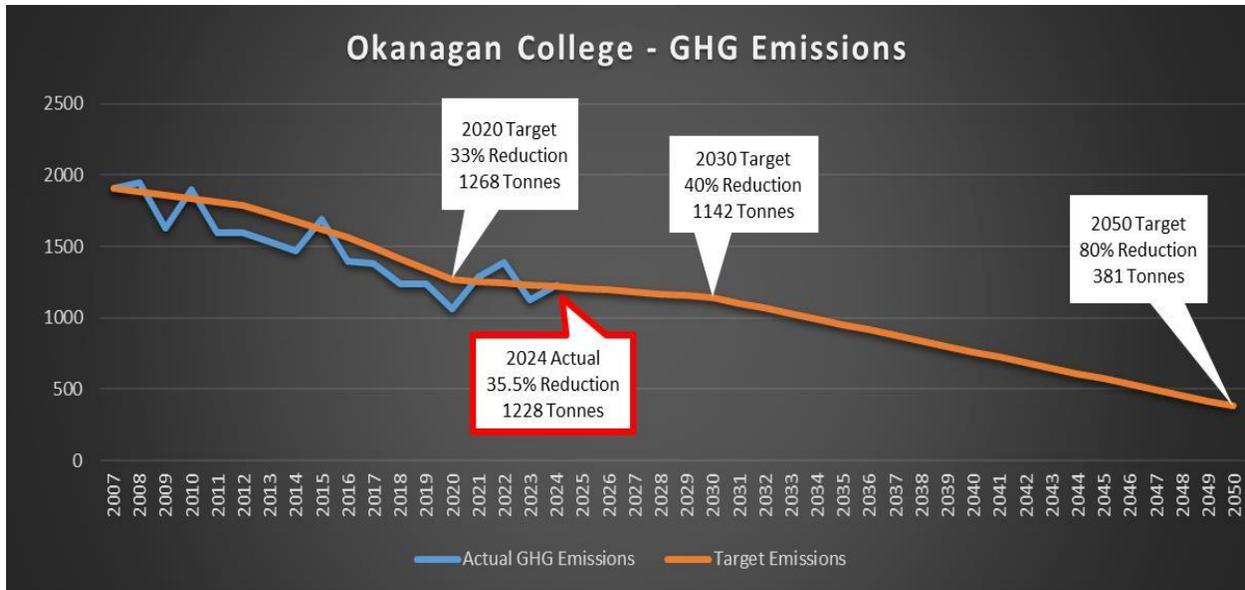
This PSO Climate Change Accountability Report for the period January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024 summarizes our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions profile, the total offsets to reach net-zero emissions, the actions we have taken in 2024 to minimize our GHG emissions, and our plans to continue reducing emissions in 2025 and beyond.

Overview

Okanagan College continues to develop and enhance its focus on sustainability from the perspective of an organization with responsibility for education, training, and community development.

This perspective has gradually changed our overall culture which in turn has fostered a shift in our normal operating practices and habits. We commute more sustainably (using both technology and active transportation options), print less and are also far more flexible in office arrangements – allowing for better space utilization. Some of these related emissions reductions (such as reduced commuting) are not tracked as part of the provincial carbon neutral program but are still considered significant climate victories for our community.

The quest for improvement is ongoing. The institution has established a goal to exceed the provincially mandated Bill 44 targets for carbon emissions with an annual carbon emission reduction target of eighty tons per year. Overall, we are managing to stay ahead of that pace with the exception of a handful of winter seasons where longer than usual cold snaps drove our heating-related emissions up significantly. This illustrates the importance of decarbonizing our heating systems wherever possible.



Emissions Reductions: Actions and Plans

A. Stationary Sources (e.g., buildings, power generation)

All the construction projects we engage in provide us with the infrastructure and opportunity to share construction best practices with our students and the communities we serve.

Student Housing Projects - There were four student housing projects on the go in 2024, all at different stages of construction, two opening in May and Sep. 2024, one opened Jan, 2025 and the final one broke ground in fall 2024, to be occupied for Sep. 2026. Step Code 4 was the goal for these projects, and while preliminary design was overbudget putting that goal in jeopardy, changes in design and project delivery model provided the opportunity to keep all the desired design elements including energy and carbon targets.

Recreation and Wellness Centre - The College and the City of Kelowna announced a creative partnership that will provide access to a recreation and wellness centre for the college staff & students as well as the Okanagan community at large.

This shared facility includes a gymnasium and flexible spaces suitable for competitive and recreational sports, as well as an indoor running track and weight room. It will be open for use in time for the 2026/27 school year.





Centre for Food, Wine & Tourism – This project began design work in 2024 and will break ground in spring 2025. The building will ultimately support programming in, culinary, business, viticulture, and tourism. Pursuit of sustainability targets include BC Energy step code 3 as well as Rick Hansen and Well. This project's design will also include a strong integration with the BC Transit hub directly in front of the building, which will help support our long-term transportation planning and related emissions.

Additional Activities - The College has also received another year of funding from FortisBC to support our Energy Analyst position. This partnership is specifically intended to identify energy reduction opportunities as well as help develop and implement an institutional 'Carbon Zero' action plan. This funding has been in place since December 2022 and the analyst continues to provide us with excellent information to help us make energy and carbon saving decisions. Deep energy audits of our most energy intensive buildings were started in fall 2023 with the final report currently under review leading to energy efficiency projects to begin in 2025.

B. Mobile Sources (e.g., fleet vehicles, off-road/portable equipment)



Fleet Electrification. – While Okanagan College did not add any new electric vehicles in 2024, we did implement an on-line fleet vehicle booking system which increased our EV fleet usage by more than 50%. As these vehicles are available for staff to reserve for intercampus travel, this means more opportunities for staff to ‘try-out’ electric vehicles, before making their own personal vehicle purchasing decisions. We are also now active participants in the BC EV Alliance Program which is intended to allow our EV charging infrastructure to support province-wide charging services to other provincial agencies.



C. Paper Consumption

Printing - The pandemic-driven push to a more digital operating model has led to lasting change in our information management strategies. Most of us are now more comfortable with the digital data storage and communication mediums which has resulted in printing levels much less than pre-COVID and, as an added benefit, our space utilization has also improved in many areas as we continue to remove ‘no-longer-needed’ shelving and filing cabinets.

The College also started a pilot program with 100% recycled paper at the end of 2024 with the first paper deployed in early 2025.

2024 GHG Emissions and Offset Summary Table:

Okanagan College 2024 GHG Emissions and Offsets Summary	
GHG emissions for the period January 1 - December 31, 2024	
<i>[See Appendix 1 for instructions on how to access your 2024 emissions data from CGRT. Cells A and B below are identified in Figure 1; cells C and D are identified in Figure 2.]</i>	
Total BioCO ₂	5.69
Total Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	1234
Total Offsets (tCO ₂ e)	1228





Adjustments to Offset Required GHG Emissions Reported in Prior Years	
Total Offsets Adjustment (tCO ₂ e)	0
Grand Total Offsets for the 2024 Reporting Year	
Grand Total Offsets to be Retired for 2024 Reporting Year (tCO ₂ e) <i>[must round to a whole number (no decimal places)]</i>	1228
Offset Investment (\$) <i>[Grand Total Offsets to be Retired for 2024 Reporting Year x \$25 per tCO₂e]</i>	\$30,700

Retirement of Offsets:

In accordance with the requirements of the Climate Change Accountability Act and Carbon Neutral Government Regulation, Okanagan College is responsible for arranging for the retirement of the offsets obligation reported above for the 2024 calendar year, together with any adjustments reported for past calendar years (if applicable). The College hereby agrees that, in exchange for the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the Ministry) ensuring that these offsets are retired on the College's behalf, the College will pay within 30 days, the associated invoice to be issued by the Ministry in an amount equal to \$25 per tonne of offsets retired on its behalf plus GST.

PART 2. Public Sector Leadership

A. Climate Risk Management

Unusual weather events again factored heavily in our 2024 operations. Extended hot and cold weather events helped us identify more limitations in several heating and cooling systems. Strategic replacements for some systems and deeper assessments for others continue to dominate our infrastructure planning. Changes in rainfall patterns have also required us to focus more on our stormwater management systems.

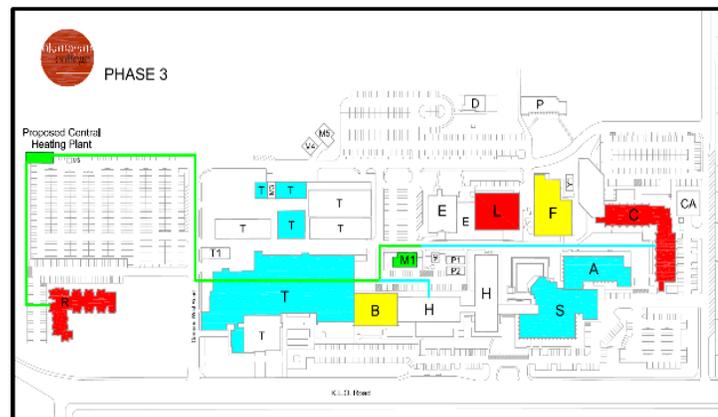


B. Other Sustainability Initiatives & Success Stories

While our overall GHG reduction progress is comforting, the Paris Accord and follow-up 2018 report from the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) have illustrated that there is a global need for more ambitious targets. This point is supported by the continuation of unusual weather-related events which seem to be more frequent and more intense. This new reality continues to be the driving force behind the development of our carbon zero plan. While the plan is initially focusing on reducing scope 1 and 2 emissions, tackling the significant scope 3 emissions such as from commuting, purchasing and waste management will not be overlooked. The intent of the plan is to reduce our emissions while ensuring we impart a culture of sustainability into the entire college population and the communities we serve. This plan is also designed to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



The first phase of this plan was driven by the pursuit of the Carbon Zero designation for the new Health Sciences Centre which required us to develop a strategic “Zero Carbon Transition Plan” for the entire Kelowna campus. This includes energy reduction strategies, deep energy retrofits to some of our older buildings as well as an expansion of the central heat pump plant which uses treated effluent from the neighboring wastewater treatment plant as the heat source. The overall infrastructure plan is intended to be staged over a decade and expand to include all campuses, taking advantage of any infrastructure changes, partnerships, and funding opportunities as they materialize. When fully implemented this plan will account for a GHG reduction of approximately 65% of baseline emissions, which would be a big step towards the mandated 80% reduction by the year 2050.





Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS)

September 2024 was the starting point for the 'performance period' for the College's next STARS rating. While we expect to see a significant improvement over our 2023 baseline rating. A drop in enrollment due to various external forces has led to many changes in operational and reporting structures which will surely have an impact on the final results. Regardless, the tracking, reporting and post report evaluation continue to act as powerful tools for fostering continuous improvement.



Executive sign-off:

June 9, 2025

Signature

Date

Neil Fassina

President

Name (please print)

Title