

January 2026

Sustainability Newsletter



Happy New Year! Welcome to our January 2026 sustainability newsletter! As winter blankets the Okanagan Valley, it's the perfect time to reflect on our achievements and set purposeful sustainability goals. With advancements in renewable energy and community climate planning, let's embrace 2026 by shaping resilient futures together!



In British Columbia and Canada, sustainability initiatives flourish within post-secondary institutions, industry collaborations, and government strategies. These efforts highlight the vital links between environmental health, economic growth, and community wellbeing, reflecting our college's mission. From joining research teams to adopting eco-friendly travel and engaging in local projects, there's something for everyone.

Winter presents unique environmental challenges, from energy surges to wildfire recovery. Stay informed about practical actions, local updates, and global sustainability trends. Let's make 2026 a year of impactful learning and action, starting in the stunning Okanagan Valley.

Practical Actions for January :

1. Conduct an energy audit at home or your workspace to identify winter efficiency gains.
2. Reduce food waste by meal planning and proper storage.
3. Support local producers at farmers' markets or community food hubs.
4. Start a sustainability journal to track goals and habits through the year.

1) Conduct an Energy Audit at Home or Workspace

Why it matters

In winter, heating drives substantial energy use in homes and campuses. Inefficient buildings raise energy demand and costs. Pinpointing energy loss boosts comfort, affordability, and reduces environmental impact.

What we can do

- Check for drafts around windows, doors, and vents.
- Review heating settings and thermostat schedules.
- Switch to LED lighting and energy-efficient power bars.
- Turn off unused electronics and equipment.
- Use online or utility-provided energy audit checklists.

Local Tip

Please refer below links for more practical strategies.

1. [FORTIS BC Energy-saving tips and technologies.](#)
2. [BC Hydro Energy-saving tips and technologies.](#)

2. Reduce Food Waste Through Meal Planning and Proper Storage

Why it matters

The decomposition of organic materials in landfills leads to substantial methane emissions from food waste. By minimizing waste, we save vital resources like water, energy, and labor, ultimately reducing costs as well.

What we can do

- Plan meals before grocery shopping.
- Store food properly to extend freshness.
- Freeze leftovers and surplus produce.
- Use “eat-me-first” containers for foods nearing expiry.
- Learn the difference between “best before” and “expiry” dates.

3. Support Local Producers at Farmers' Markets

Why it matters

Purchasing food from local sources minimizes transportation emissions, bolsters regional farmers, and enhances food security. Additionally, local food networks are more adaptable to climate challenges and aid in conserving agricultural land.

What we can do

- Shop at winter farmers' markets and local food stores.
- Choose seasonal produce grown in BC.
- Learn where food comes from and how it's produced.
- Support Indigenous and small-scale food producers.

4. Start a Sustainability Journal to Track Goals and Habit

Why it matters

Monitoring habits transforms well-meaning intentions into lasting changes. A sustainability journal enhances awareness of everyday decisions, fosters accountability, and showcases growth throughout the journey.

What we can do

- Set monthly sustainability goals (energy, waste, travel, food).
- Reflect weekly on challenges and successes.
- Track habits such as energy use, waste reduction, or active transportation.
- Celebrate small wins and adjust goals as needed.

Please refer to <https://www.okanagacollege.ca/sustainability> for more details and updates.

Share your thoughts to enhance our sustainability efforts at:



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