

Greening the Game: Football and Beyond



Your Student Government

Authors:

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Abstract:

Greening the Game is a program that is focused on making our athletic event more environmentally friendly and waste conscious. It will do this by educating fans, implementing recycling systems, encouraging fans to purchase certain items, and by encouraging our fans to

travel to the university in a way that decreases the amount of cars that come to the university for our athletic events. It is a collection of students, faculty, staff, and fans working together to improve our athletic events with regard to sustainability.

People Involved:

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Model United Nations

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Groups Involved:

Associated Students of the University of Arizona Students for Sustainability- Organization that is hosting the project, and would be hiring the staff as well as working with FM.

Associated Students of the University of Arizona- Provided support to initiate this project, and offers resources to ensure success.

Grassroots Volunteers- Help at the events in picking up recycling and educating fans. Run through Students for Sustainability.

Facilities Management- Work with them to coordinate pick up and bin placement. They are also in charge of the recycling on the campus.

Waste Management- The company we are contracted with for our waste. Have offered to help with education at athletic events.

Model United Nations (Other Clubs that are able to help out)- The club that was hired to help pick up the recycling after the game.

Office of Sustainability- Worked with this entity to help promote this project, and connect between the different entities to make this happen. They also have put an engineering management intern on their staff to map and implement bins around the athletic facilities to help with this effort.

Concessions-Help promote the reusable items, and then also ensure their staff and volunteers are recycling when finished with packaging.

ZonaZoo- They help educate the students about sustainability efforts happening in the games.

Vision:

Greening the Game is an opportunity to put our University as one of the big players in sustainability in the nation. It is a way to interact with our fans, and to get them to think about the impact of their actions even when visiting our campus. Collectively, athletics generates a lot of waste, from fans driving a lot of cars onto the mall and into the neighborhoods surrounding the campus, to buying a lot of gear to support our team. Eventually we need to become the green team that the nation is looking to.

Recycling is a very easy change that we can make, and we are getting there through the initiation of this project. However, this needs to be expanded to a pre, during, and post game operation, especially during football games, to divert the maximum amount of waste that we can to the recycling plants. Before the game there should be students monitoring and educating about recycling in the tailgating areas of the university, or even around ZonaZoo waiting zone. They should be working with people so that our fans think a bit more about where they are putting their waste. As people are entering the stadium paid students should be standing at the entrances, collecting bottles and cans as people enter to prevent them from getting thrown away. During the game concessions stands should be collecting their boxes that their goods come in in stacks to be recycled later, and advertising should be letting fans know about how they can play their part in greening the game. After the game a club, who now has the ability to make sustainability part of

their lives, can help clean up, and get the material that did not make its way to the recycling bins. This is a comprehensive way to increase our recycling rates, especially when it comes to football games specifically. For the other athletic events advertising through ZonaZoo and other entities will have to be done because it is not feasible to have the same methods that we do with football.

When dealing with traffic around game time we should be working on mitigating people driving to the game. We can do this by providing incentive, such as a bike in tailgating area, encouraging fans to car pool, offering bike taxis in the surrounding neighborhoods, and things of that sort. Giving people a reason to want to transport themselves differently will make the difference.

The final way that we can target fans until they are accustomed to the other changes and promotions is by encouraging them to purchase items that are reusable when coming to our stadiums. A fan can buy a reusable popcorn tin or cup, and it cost the same to refill as a much smaller disposable cup or tin. For example souvenir cup is \$6.00 when bought initially, or you can bring in last year's cup, which costs the same amount, either way, each time you refill it the cost is \$3.00, and then the price of the disposable one is also \$3.00. This goes for the popcorn as well. People need to know about the economic value of these deals, but should also know that this helps the environment. Encouraging fans to bring their own reusable water bottles is important too because you cannot get a free cup of water in any of the athletic facilities. It costs \$1.00 for the cup or \$3.00 for the bottle. Through this program, stands cannot charge for water refills if fans bring their own reusable water bottles. These are easy ways the fans can save money as well as use less resources overall. It would be great to get all three of these going in our facilities, and we are already starting to change.

Background:

In 2009 Students for Sustainability had two interns that were working on a greening athletics program, and analyzing the carbon footprint. Once it was discovered that the U of A did not even have recycling in our athletic facilities the project of Greening the Game was initiated. It took two year of meetings and planning with various entities such as athletics, facilities management, concessions, Army ROTC, the Office of Sustainability and others to get everyone to start thinking of ways to green our games. As a launch this previous year we implemented a recycling program into the football stadium for the first time in Fall 2011. We did not set up bins for fans, but we did this by working with facilities management, athletics, ASUA, and the Office of Sustainability. We recruited a club, Model United Nations, by offering them a certain amount of money, \$1,500.00, to pick up recycling after each of the football games as a fundraiser for the club.

For this project we made an agreement with facilities management that we would go in after every home football game in the stadium and pick up water bottles/other recyclables for an hour after the game was released. The items that can be recycled are plastics 1-7 (as indicated on the bottom of the plastic material in the recycling triangle), pamphlets, pizza boxes without the pizza, drink holders (corrugated cardboard), and other products such as glass and cans. These are

all items that were sitting in the stands before, and they were not being collected. This is a problem, not only because of the environmental impacts, but it also costs the University more money to throw away waste than to recycle it. Listed below were the totals for each of the games:

Total pounds recycled: 2,380

2011 Football Season Recycling Totals:

NAU (9/3/11): 45 bags X 7 pound = 315 pounds

Stanford (9/17/11): 90 bags X 7 pounds = 630 pounds (945 pounds)

Oregon (9/24/11): 81 bags X 7 pounds = 567 pounds (1,512 pounds)

UCLA (10/22/11): 79 bags X 7 pounds = 553 pounds (2,065 pounds)

Utah (11/5/11): 45 bags X 7 pounds = 315 pounds (2,380 pounds)

This is just the beginning of what could happen with recycling and other green initiatives in our athletics programs, and it will be expanded as the program continues.

Project Goals:

- Collect from football events 4,600 pounds of recycling.
- Hire 10 students to help educate in tailgating as well as collect recycling at the doors of the stadium
- Put recycling bins in all athletics facilities.
- At each concession stand put up a poster to educate people on what options they have to be more sustainable.
- In each concession stand have a recycling place designated with signage about what can be recycled for staff.
- Implement a designated bike area for tailgating.

Elaborated Plans:

Tailgating Recycling: Working with facilities management, we will be putting up recycling bins throughout the tailgating area, and have hired students walk around to help educate fans about recycling as well as manage the recycling bins in that area. These students will then be positioned at the entrances of the stadium to collect recyclable there.

Tailgating Bike Area: A section of the mall would be reserved for bikes to come and tailgate with the other fans. There would be grills and tables that the bikers could use during that time. This will be a work in progress, and may not be there next season, but we would work with event planning and athletics.

Recycling in other Athletics Facilities: The Office of Sustainability has hired an intern to help map and identify where bins can be strategically be placed in the different facilities to help increase our recycling rates. Additionally, Waste Management and Facilities Management are working on plans to implement this currently.

Concessions: Signs will need to be made for the concession stand so employees know the options they have to be more environmentally friendly and sustainable. The head of the unions will have to be contacted to move this forward, and we have worked with that person before, although it is currently in transition.

Transportation: Work with bike taxi companies to ride around the neighborhoods as well as advertise the bus system to get to the stadium during the game day The Bike Area for tailgating might curtail the number of cars coming into the area.

Project Timeline:

These mini projects, as a part of the whole project, will be worked on for the next season of athletic events. The only project that is guaranteed to happen next season with the help of the Green Fund, will be recycling at the football stadium with hired staff in the tailgating areas. Additionally, signs will be able to be posted in the concession stands, but we are working on being able to get them posted outside of the concession stands. Other than that the other projects will be worked on and implemented, if not next season, the season after that.

Spring Semester 2012: Work with concessions to get them to put up signs and designate locations for recycling. Work with athletics and event planning to identify how to get the bike tailgating into place. Meet with FM, and their inter from the Office of Sustainability to discuss how the program is going to work next season.

Summer 2012: Get everything into place for the season, signs hung, uniforms made, and all entities need to know their role.

August 2012: Identify Club to work with to pick up recycling as well as hire staff at that time. Launch Greening the Game during first football game, and start preparing other stadiums with educational information.

Fall 2012: Participate in the football games and work with facilities management and waste management on the education of the fans. Implement educational programs about the reusable items that are offered for concessions.

Budget:

\$1,500.00	Student Club Clean Up- Post Football Game
\$4,000.00	Hired Student Green Team (6 games/\$8 hour/10 students)
\$500.00	Educational Materials/Signs Concession Stands

\$200.00

Uniforms for the Green Team

\$6,200.00 **Total**

Monies needed for the bike in tailgating, if that goes through this year, will come from the Associated Students of the University of Arizona, or Students for Sustainability. Other items that could come up that are not listed here will also be covered by that entity.