

## **Leading By Example: Campuses Walking the Talk**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Just through their day-to-day activities, colleges and universities have an impact on local, regional and even global environments. From fuel and electricity use to heat, cool and light dorms and offices, to the generation of waste from cafeteria and administrative functions, to the consumption of water to maintain landscapes, campuses are inadvertently contributing to climate change, water withdrawal from local aquifers and air emissions from waste to energy incinerators, just to name a few.

At the same time that universities work to inspire students and professors to imbue principles of sustainability in the classroom, there exists a significant opportunity to demonstrate real life examples of such efforts by “greening” the campuses. When students see and are part of campus wide efforts to recycle, conserve energy and water, reduce toxics, etc., they are more likely to fully understand and appreciate the sustainability issues being taught in the classrooms. The same can be said for professors and staff who will take campus lessons to their homes and families.

There is good news. Many campuses, including public colleges and universities in Massachusetts, are engaged in various efforts to incorporate sustainable practices into facility operations wherever possible. Recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable design and construction- these are just a few of the programs occurring at campuses throughout the state.

This presentation will introduce to participants the broad range of environmental and sustainable efforts currently underway on Massachusetts campuses, with a description of the environmental benefits and long-term cost savings associated with each project. Additionally, participants will learn about the State Sustainability Program (established by Executive Order #438) and its efforts to collaborate with campuses on environmental projects as well as long-range planning for sustainability. And lastly, workshop participants will learn about the necessary ingredients to establish a process for sustainability on campus- who are the key players, what are the principal issues to consider, and how to integrate greening the campus efforts into a broader sustainability program that involves students, professors and the community.