

Ontario Tech University

Annual Sustainability Report



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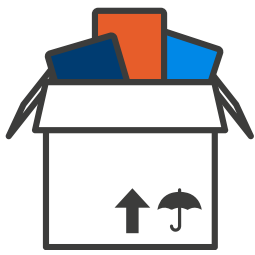


Land Acknowledgement

Ontario Tech University acknowledges the lands and people of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. We are thankful to be welcomed on these lands in friendship. The lands we are situated on are covered under the Williams Treaties and the traditional territory of the Mississaugas, a branch of the greater Anishinaabeg Nation, including Algonquin, Ojibway, Odawa and Pottawatomi.

These lands remain home to a number of Indigenous nations and people. We acknowledge this land out of respect for the Indigenous nations who have cared for Turtle Island, also called North America, from before the arrival of settler peoples until this day. Most importantly, we remember the history of these lands has been tainted by poor treatment and a lack of friendship with the First Nations who call them home.

AT A GLANCE



286

residence items
rehomed & distributed



421

university furniture items
donated & saved from landfill

4 acres of wildflower
fields planted



>1,200

lbs of food donated to
Feed the Need Durham



41 sustainability events held

**Fair
Trade**



Campus designation since 2023



3 new pollinator
gardens on campus

20



organizations collaborated with



Gold AASHE rating

Environment



Did you know?

Since 2016, the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability has planted over 14.5 hectares of wildflowers and 21,000 trees.



This summer, our one acre veggie garden on the campus farm produced over **200 lbs** of produce.



In 2024, 4 campus markets were held where the community had an opportunity to purchase fresh, local produce from the campus farm at a sliding-scale price.

\$1,358.15 in total campus market sales



Over **96 lbs** of produce was donated to Hunter's Kitchen.





2024 Planting on the Campus Farm:

- 108 trees
- 220 plants
- 40 annuals from seed
- 40 acres of wildflowers

30

Mature trees from the farm nursery planted on campus & farm land



3

New pollinator gardens installed on north campus

Pollinators at play

This site contains native plants which provide food and shelter for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinators.

Learn more at BeeCityCanada.org



Brown-lipped Snail
Cepaea nemoralis
3 6 days ago



Mourning Dove
Zenaida macroura
2 6 days ago



Isabella Tiger Moth
Pyrrharctia isabella
3 6 days ago



Western Conifer Seed Bug
Leptoglossus occidentalis
2 3 days ago



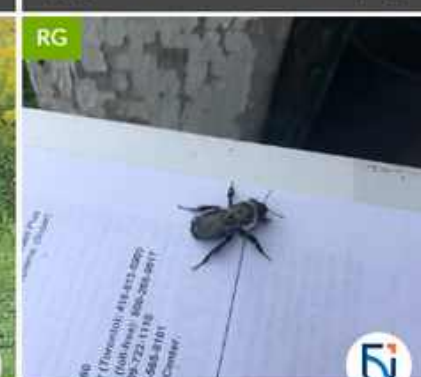
Yellow Garden Spider
Argiope aurantia
2 6 days ago



Meadow Voles
Genus *Microtus*
1 6 days ago



Wild Turkey
Meleagris gallopavo
2 14 days ago



Common Eastern Bumble Bee
Bombus impatiens
2 14 days ago

1,000

entries reached on
Ontario Tech
Biodiversity Inventory

97 biodiversity
inventory submissions
made in 2024

 iNaturalist





Through the help of volunteers **40 bags** worth of invasive plants including buckthorn, burdock, and dog-strangling vine were removed from campus land.

Ontario Tech University's rainwater gardens are a research site investigating a biological control method for invasive phragmites.

Moth eggs are inserted into the stems of the plants where they hatch and diminish the invasive population.



25 Bags of litter collected on campus



>9,000

Cigarette butts collected

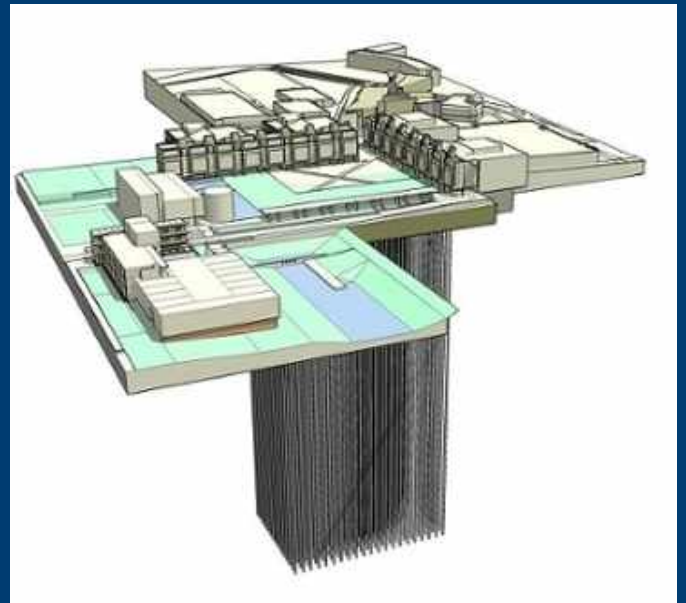


Operations



Did you know?

Ontario Tech University is home to one of the largest geothermal well fields in North America, which is used for heating and cooling campus buildings.





**Ontario
Tech has a
goal to halve
its emissions
by 2030 and
be net zero
by 2050**



Ontario Tech University submitted a STARS report in January 2024, awarding the university a **gold ranking** for the third time.

This year, the university was also recognized amongst top-performing institutions in the AASHE Sustainable Campus Index for its **sustainable purchasing decisions**.

2024

Sustainable Campus Index



Purchasing

Collectively, institutions spend many billions of dollars on goods and services annually. Each purchasing decision represents an opportunity for institutions to choose environmentally and socially preferable products and services, and support companies with strong commitments to sustainability. This section covers general and commodity-specific sustainable purchasing policies, life cycle cost analysis and purchase of electronics, paper, and cleaning products.

Fairtrade table pop-up at Ontario Tech University, which prioritizes sustainable purchasing choices by maintaining a Fairtrade campus. Photo credit: Ontario Tech University





STARS Ranking Highlights

Scored full points for:

- Landscape management
- Community partnerships
- Participation in public policy
- Undergraduate program
- Graduate program
- Sustainability literacy assessment
- Cleaning & janitorial purchasing

Ranked 351 out of 1,182 universities



Rank	University	Total Score	SI Score	EC Score	WS Score	WR Score	TR Score	ED Score
351	Ontario Tech University 📍 Canada, North America	7045	1150	1575	1275	810	960	1275





**FURNITURE
REUSE
PROGRAM**



Furniture Reuse Program Highlights

421 Pieces of furniture donated to students, staff, and community members.

28 cases of 80% tree-free paper given to university departments, shelters, and local schools.



RESIDENCE REUSE PROGRAM



Residence Reuse Program Highlights

286

items saved from
landfill and rehomed
to the community.



- Homeware
- Appliances
- Bedding
- School supplies
- Clothing
- Books
- Shoes
- Food

Waste Audit Data

71%

of waste found could have been diverted



37% recycling



34% compost

~10%

of all waste came from coffee cups



39%

of the recycling stream had contaminated materials (e.g. coffee cups, paper towels, non-recyclable waste)

14.36 MT

of paper towels were found in the waste to energy stream

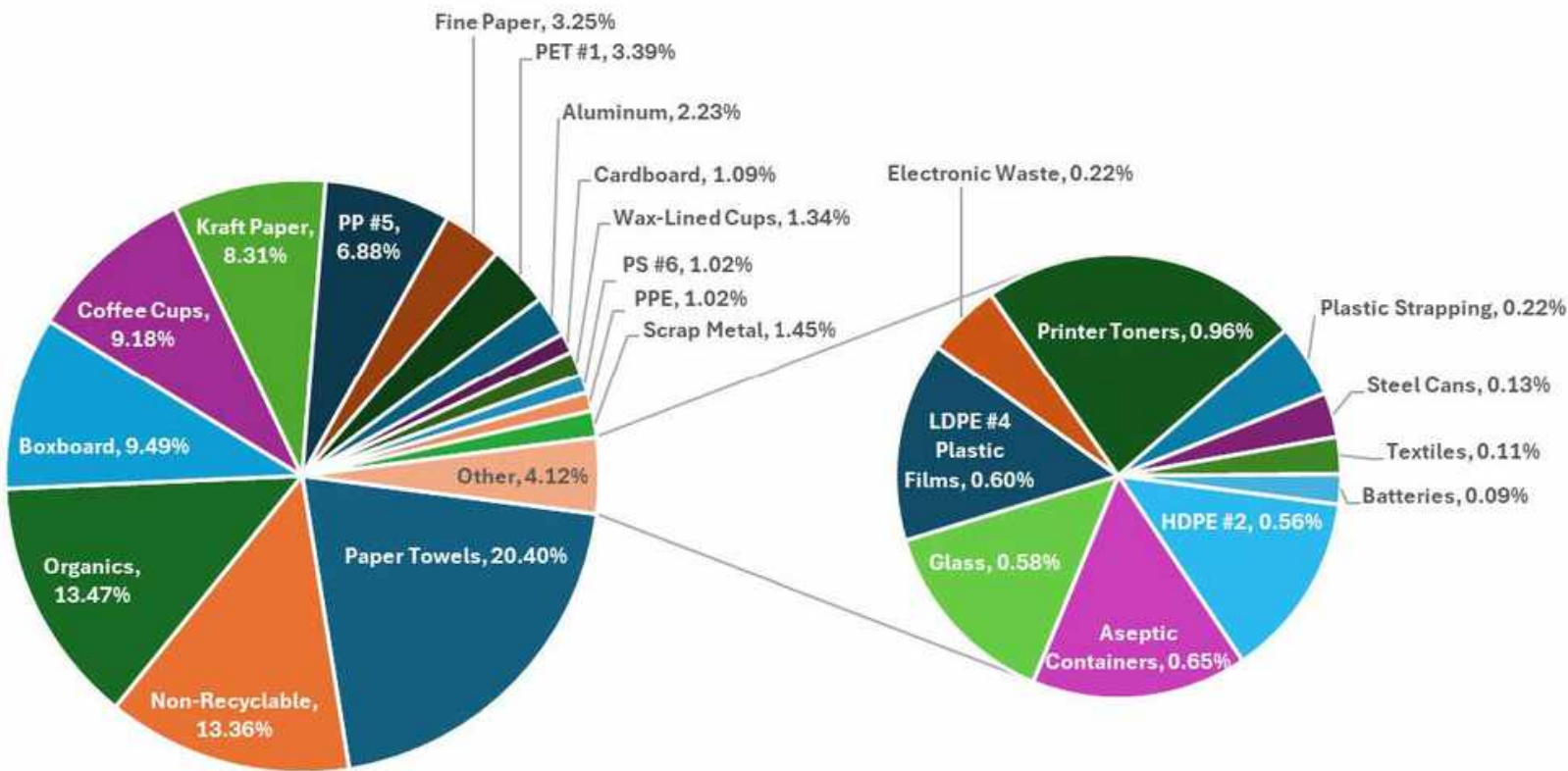


Figure 1: Waste Sample Composition by Material (in % of sample by mass).

Note: The secondary pie exemplifies materials with less than 1% values.

Paper towels (20.40%), non-recyclable (13.36%), organics (13.47%), boxboard (9.49%), and coffee cups (9.81%) had a combined weight which contributed to over 65.90% of the sample weight.

Recommendations

1

Additional hand dryers in the washrooms

2

A “Take a Box, Bring a Box” program, where students can return their used take-out containers for a new one when they purchase take-out food.

3

Increase the number of organic collection bins



Active Transportation

This year, two new double decker bike racks were installed by UA and Shawenjigewining Hall. Additionally, three bike repair stations were installed on campus by UA, Shawenjigewining Hall, and SIRC. Most days the bike racks are full which indicates a demand for active transportation accessibility for campus users.

The Office of Campus Infrastructure & Sustainability

Created two new sustainable products



Social Good



Did you know?

This year, the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability unveiled the Honeycomb Archway, a placemaking project with a focus on reconciliation, sustainability, and accessibility.



41

Sustainability events organized by the Office of Campus Infrastructure & Sustainability



In February, Ontario Tech University hosted a sustainability art contest where local artists were invited to interpret sustainability through their art.

41 Submissions



The top fifteen finalists were invited to showcase their submissions at an art exhibition. The event explored the connections between attendees, their communities, and how climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and other human-made environmental problems, challenge us to think about positive and just solutions.

Buzzworthy Bulletin



In 2024, the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability launched the Buzzworthy Bulletin, a monthly newsletter to learn more about all things sustainability at Ontario Tech.

95

**Newsletter
subscribers**



This year, over 1,000 students, staff, and community members have been engaged in sustainability events and initiatives

Fairtrade at Ontario Tech



Ontario Tech University has been recognized as a designated Fairtrade Campus since 2023.

During Fairtrade Month various educational opportunities and social engagement events were held to celebrate, raise awareness and empower our campus community to make ethical choices.



Fairtrade products offered at on-campus dining locations:

- Coffee (Mountain View Estates and Ridgeback Brew)
- Tea (Numi Organic Tea)
- Chocolate bars (Camino)



12 Sustainability Champions

Sustainability Champions are campus leaders who provide and develop sustainability initiatives at the university. They work collaboratively with the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability to bring sustainable project ideas to life through the use of social media, engagement events and workshops.

Collaborated with

20 Organizations



\$18,550

Amount of grant money received in 2024 for sustainability programming



Thank you to our generous grantors!



THE YOUTH HARBOUR



Donated over 1,200 lbs of food to Feed the Need in Durham



128 gifts and prizes given away

Including Fairtrade prize packs, Ontario Tech prize packs, Ontario Tech honey and candles, Fairtrade coffee and tea, and gift cards to zero waste stores, grocery stores, and an Oshawa eco park.



Academics



Did you know?

Ontario Tech University offers 52 sustainability focused undergraduate courses.



45 students enrolled in Sustainability Minor



Ontario Tech Environmental Education Conference



Every year, the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability is invited to present at the Faculty of Education's Environmental Education conference. This year's presentation focused on helping children engage and connect with the outdoors.



Sustainability program open for enrollment

The brand new sustainability program prepares students to lead in various careers addressing modern sustainability challenges. The senior capstone project involves pan-disciplinary teams tackling real-world sustainability issues.

This program aims to equip graduates with the expertise and leadership skills needed to contribute impactful solutions to **global sustainability challenges.**

MOST IMPACTFUL SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS OF 2024



Campus Butt Blitz



4 lbs

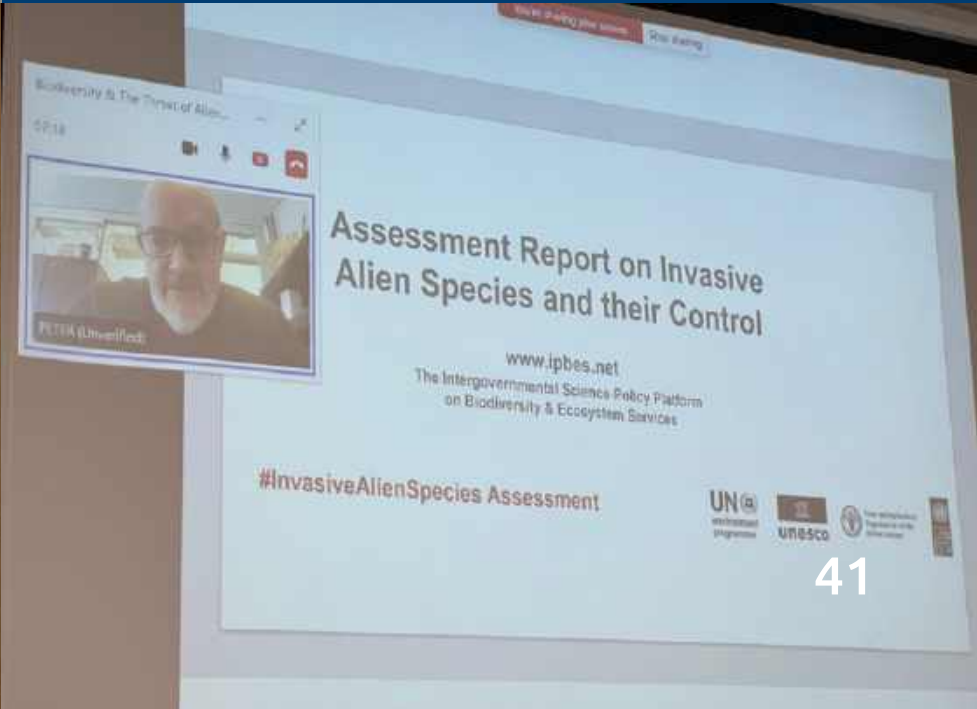
Of cigarette butt waste was removed from our smoke-free campus. Areas with high amounts of cigarette butt litter included the walkway from Durham College to the residential street Dalhousie Crescent, as well as all parking lots on campus.



Sustainability Month

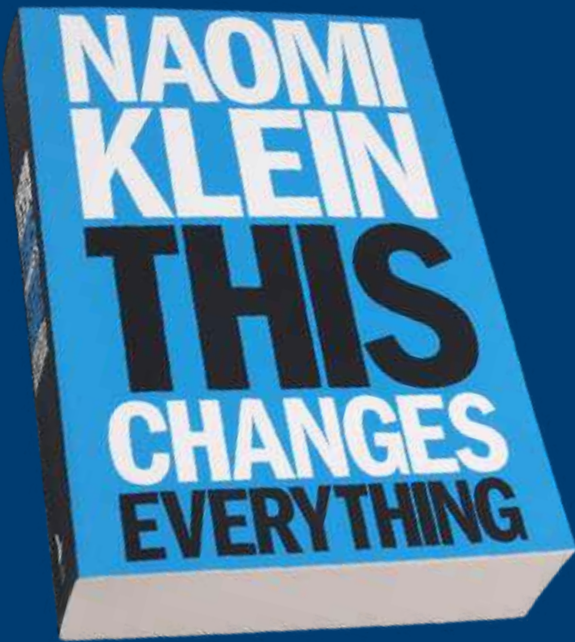


This year's sustainability month focused on nurturing community connections and building a deeper understanding of sustainability. Events included a panel on invasive species, a moccasin identifier workshop with Indigenous Education and Cultural Services, the annual Sustainability Fest featuring We Cloud and a repair cafe, and finally a Climate Symposium featuring local environmental groups.



Sustainability Book Club

The second annual sustainability book club featured **This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein**. This book exposes the myths that are clouding the climate debate and who is behind it.



Twenty seven Ontario Tech staff and students registered for the book club and met both virtually and online for discussion. Many themes were discussed such as what can we as individuals do against the large polluting corporations and how the world has changed since this book was published.

The book club allowed people from across the university to engage in discussion around the climate crisis to feel a sense of community.

The Great Sustainability Debate

Presented a unique opportunity to hear the thoughts and opinions of community leaders on climate issues. The low waste event featured over 100 attendees, plant-based catering, reusable containers and sustainable prizes from local businesses.



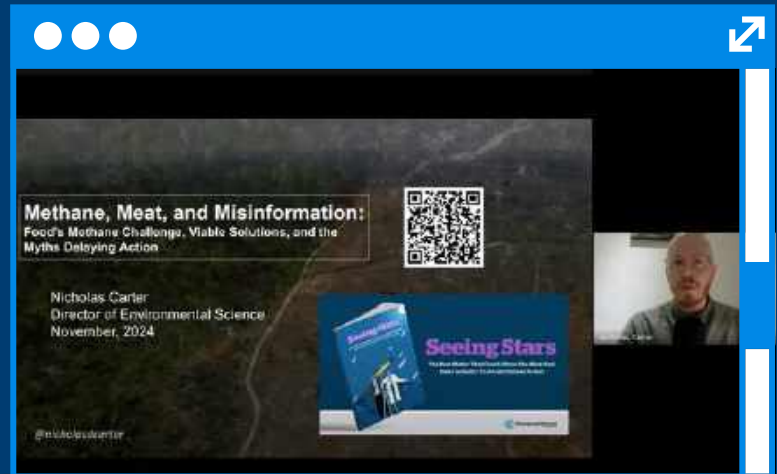
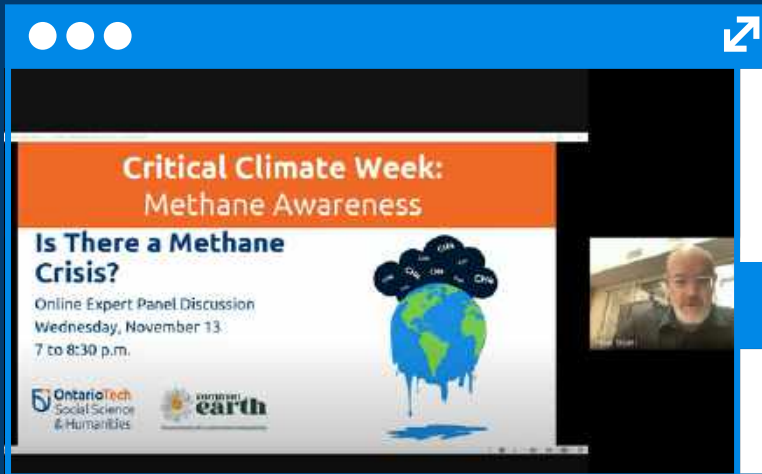


Durham Climate Roundtable Fall Forum

The annual forum showcased a report on Durham Region's greenhouse gas inventory, a panel with industry experts, and a fair with local environmental organizations. This event provided an opportunity for the public to learn more about climate action in Durham Region.



Critical Climate Week



2 webinars



Community
movie night



Student-centred
hackathon



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