

Aquinas College Sustainability Facts

Did you know...?

Waste:

- Plastic zipper storage bags and packing peanuts are trash.
- You can dispose of deodorant containers and other personal care and beauty items in Terracycle.
- Styrofoam can be recycled in the special collection area. Styrofoam is actually a brand name. “Polystyrene” is the material accepted in this special collection category. Polystyrene can often be recognized by the tiny beads that make up the product and leave quite a mess when opening a package. Even food soiled polystyrene (such as polystyrene to-go containers and coffee cups) is acceptable.
- All electronic waste can be recycled in special collections. This includes anything with a battery or a cord, including the battery and the cord.
- Goodwill accepts items in poor condition, such as rags, broken lamps, and one shoe. If they cannot resell your item in their stores, they will recycle it at their massive recycling center.
- Tin and aluminum are common items accepted in recycling, including tin cans, beverage cans and aluminum foil. You do not need to remove the paper labels from the cans. Even empty aluminum aerosol cans can be recycled in the blue bins.
- Many different types of plastic exist and each type is assigned a number. For example number one is stamped on Polyethylene Terephthalate (PETE) plastic, which is a common plastic for water bottles and salad dressing bottles. The plastics are sorted by number at the recycling plant and sold to manufacturers as a raw material. Plastics stamped with a number between one and seven are recyclable, except styrofoam (#6).
- The recycling center only takes certain types of paper. This includes magazines, newspapers, office paper, junk mail, notebook paper, envelopes, cardboard, and paperboard.
- Everyone knows food soiled paper (such as pizza boxes) are compostable. But lots of other types of paper are compostable, whether food soiled or not. All low grade paper is compostable, including wax paper, food wrappers (i.e. Jimmy Johns), napkins, paper straw wrappers, paper sugar packets, and tissue paper.
- You can recycle several types of office supplies with Terracycle, including writing utensils and plastic tape dispensers. Examples include pens, pencils, highlighters, markers, disposable tape dispensers, and plastic tape cores.
- Plastic bags stamped with a number 2 or 4 are recyclable in the blue bins. This typically includes grocery bags, but some bread bags, plastic packaging, apple bags, etc... might be recyclable. Just look for the number!
- Bio-based plastics are made from plants rather than petroleum. Therefore, they will decompose in one year or less in a compost facility. These items will also have a recycling symbol with a number 7, which is the “other” plastic category. Ignore the recycling symbol and look for the word

“compostable” or “PLA.” Bio-based plastics must be composted.

- Most plastic products can be manufactured from biobased plastic or petroleum/crude oil plastic. The green straws and cold beverage cups that you find on campus are made from biobased plastics and therefore are compostable. Most straws from off campus restaurants like Subway and McDonalds are not biobased plastic, so they are not compostable. Although the straws are a petroleum plastic, if they do not have a 1-7 number printed on them, they are not recyclable. Therefore, most off campus straws are trash.

Transportation:

- The Rapid only costs 25 ¢ with an Aquinas ID. That is a savings of \$1.25 per ride! This represents a substantial commitment from Aquinas, as the college pays the difference as a subsidy.
- AQBikes has been providing a transportation alternative to students since 2013. You can rent a bike for \$3.
- Carpool to and from campus to cut gas emissions *and* cost. Preferred parking is even available at the Library and Campus Safety.
- Visit ridetherapid.org to find the quickest bus route to your destination. Download the *myStop* app to your iPhone to see when the next bus will arrive!

Food:

- Wege Dining Hall purchases all of its fryer oil, ham products, cereal, dairy, salad dressings, fresh herbs, and turkey products from local sources, as well as many types of produce. All salad greens served in Wege, the Corner, and the Moose are organic.
- If you have a green thumb, email Jessica Eimer for an opportunity to volunteer in our community garden. Community garden produce is available to all of campus to enjoy.
- *All* food waste can be composted, even coffee grounds, bones, and meat.
- Instead of throwing plastic zipper storage bags (such as Ziploc) away after one use, hand wash and reuse.

Energy:

- Turning off surge protectors and unplugging unused appliances is an easy way to save energy
- Wash clothes in cold water and hang to dry to save approximately \$1.00 (7.2 kWh) per load.
- Manipulate room temperatures by opening or closing windows and blinds rather than relying on air conditioning to do so.
- The Green Revolving Fund is a new initiative to save energy and use the funds from those energy savings to reinvest in creating a sustainable community. For more information, visit the Sustainability Initiative page on the Aquinas website.



CENTER FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
AT AQUINAS COLLEGE