**Tufts Environmental History**

Tufts University has a long and rich environmental history. Here is a timeline that provides an overview of our sustainability milestones for the last half century.

# 1960s

**The beginning of Tufts’ journey.**Steps towards being a leader in environmental advocacy within higher education.

**1962** Sanitary Engineering degree is first offered in the Department of Civil Engineering.

# 1970s

**1973** The M.A. degree is first offered through the new Department of Urban, Social and Environmental Policy, founded by Professor Hermann Field.

# 1980s

**1984** The Lincoln Filene Center begins the New England Environmental Network and launches the first of 18 annual New England Environmental Conferences.

**1984** The Center for Environmental Management (CEM) is established with EPA funding and begins interdisciplinary training and outreach, eventually training more than 7000 workers and certifying inspectors in asbestos and lead-based paint abatement.

**1984** The undergraduate Environmental Studies Program begins as an optional second major, open to students majoring in any field in Arts & Sciences or Engineering. Later, tracks are established in Environment & Society, Environment & Technology, and Environmental Science.

**1986** CEM receives a 5-year grant from EPA and supports more than 65 faculty members to conduct research projects, in addition to training, outreach, corporate involvement, and campus greening.

# 1990s

**1990** Tufts receives EPA funding to initiate Tufts CLEAN! (Cooperation, Learning and Environmental Awareness Now!) to reduce or eliminate harmful environmental impacts of the university’s own operations.

Tufts CLEAN! becomes a model for many other universities, with its achievements and challenges documented in Greening the Ivory Tower (1998, MIT Press) by Sarah Hammond Creighton, the former director of the Tufts Office of Sustainability.

**1990** Jean Mayer, Tufts President, convenes 22 university presidents and chancellors in Talloires, France, to discuss environmental sustainability. They sign the Talloires Declaration, a 10-point action plan for incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy into campus teaching, research, operations, and outreach. The Declaration has since been signed by over 440 university presidents and chancellors from 50 countries.

**1990** Tufts Environmental Policy is created

**1990s** Several unique interdisciplinary degree programs are started at Tufts, including the Agriculture, Food and Environment concentration (M.S./Ph.D.) in the School of Nutrition Science and Policy; the International Environment & Resource Policy program in the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy (M.A.L.D./Ph.D.); and specializations in International Veterinary Medicine, Wildlife Medicine, and Animals and Public Policy (M.S./D.V.M.) at the School of Veterinary Medicine.

**1991** Tufts Environmental Literacy Institute (TELI) receives the Presidential Environment and Conservation Challenge Award from the Council on Environmental Quality.

**1992** The University Presidents’ Secretariat for Environmental Education and Research is launched to continue the efforts begun at the Talloires Conference. The Secretariat is now the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF) within the Center for Respect of Life and the Environment in Washington, DC.

**1993** GDAE (Global Development and Environment Institute) is founded under the direction of Neva Goodwin and Professor William Moomaw to promote a better understanding of how societies can pursue their economic and community goals in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner.

**1997** The Tufts Center for Conservation Medicine (TuftsCCM) pioneers the concept of conservation medicine as a new approach focusing on the health relationships at the interface of humans, animals and the environment.

**1998** Tufts Institute of the Environment (TIE) is established under the direction of Professor William Moomaw to coordinate and catalyze environmental research, learning, outreach and service across all Schools of Tufts University.

**1999**  Tufts pledges to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, setting the goal of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from Tufts campuses to 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012.  The Tufts Climate Initiative is created.

# 2000s

**2000** John DiBiaggio, Tufts President, and Grace Perez, Executive Director of the Mystic River Watershed Association, join organizational forces in the Mystic Watershed Collaborative to improve water quality, habitat, public access and watershed awareness in the watershed where the main Tufts campus is located.

**2001** The Energy Affairs Council is established to address energy costs, reliability, and environmental impacts.

**2001** The Greening Grafton Campus Committee is established.

**2001** The first Eco-Reps program for residential students begins.

**2003** Tufts joins the Chicago Climate Exchange.  President Lawrence Bacow adopts the goals of the [New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers](http://www.negc.org/documents/NEG-ECP%20CCAP.PDF) (10% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2020 with a 75-85% reduction long term).

**2004** The interdisciplinary Water: Systems, Science and Society (WSSS) graduate program begins.

**2005** The United States Environmental Protection Agency awarded the prestigious Climate Protection Award to Tufts University for the Tufts Climate Initiative (TCI).

**2006** Construction finishes on Sophia Gordon Hall, Tufts’ first LEED-certified building. The hall was certified as LEED Gold, and includes a photovoltaic system (solar panels).

**2006** The Tufts Climate Initiative becomes a department under Tufts Central Administration and is renamed the Tufts Office of Sustainability.

**2006**  Sustainability conference “Sustainability in the Balance: Juggling Environmental Health, Economic Profitability, and Social Equity in the Global Food System” held at Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition.

**2007**  Tufts awarded “Excellence in Energy Efficiency” Award by National Grid. Tufts’ Building 20 Energy Conservation Project on the Grafton campus, won the “Best Energy Project in Higher Education” award from the New England Association of Energy Engineers.

**2008** The Eco-Ambassador program for staff starts. Tufts Environmental Literacy Institute (TELI) re-starts.

**2009** Tufts named #9 on Sierra magazine’s list of Top Ten Greenest Schools.

**2009** Tufts University Health Sciences Campus Green Initiative begins. Tisch Library Sustainability Team is formed. Single-stream recycling begins at the Dental School. Vegetable “box share” delivery to the Boston and Medford campuses begins.

**2009** Undergraduate Student Mara Gittleman wins SustainUS undergraduate Citizen Scientist award for her research on Ethiopian Agriculture

**2009** Tufts Dental School vertical expansion is complete and earns LEED Silver certification.

**2009**  Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine wins grant to look into wind power in Grafton.

# 2010s

**2010** Tufts is recognized by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships as a Business Leader for a five year body of energy conservation projects.

**2010** Weekly on-campus farmer’s market opens on Medford campus.

**2010** Tufts’ Flytzani-Stephanopoulos named first Haber professor of sustainable energy.

**2010** Tufts dining goes “trayless” as a result of advocacy by students in the Ex-College’s Environmental Action Class.

**2011**  Tufts Bikes, a student-run free bike sharing program, is launched. The undergraduate environmental group ECO reorganizes to become the Tufts Sustainability Collective to focus on sustainability action on campus.

**2011**  Hodgdon Goes Green and eliminates the sale of single use disposable beverages and bags, in response to student activism.

**2011** Tufts earns a Silver Rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS), developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

**2012** President Tony Monaco establishes a university-wide Sustainability Council to look at the areas of water, waste and energy.

**2012** Tufts Dental School Level 2 Renovation Project earns LEED Gold Certification.

**2012** Tufts receives a Green Award from the City of Medford at the 2012 Harvest Your Energy Festival in recognition of its work implementing energy efficiency, water conservation and  resource use reduction efforts.

**2012** Tufts is presented with the Silver Institution Recycling Award at MassRecycles’s 17th Annual Recycling Awards.

**2013** The Biology Department Collaborative Center (200 Boston Ave) received LEED Gold certification.

**2013** The Campus Sustainability Council releases the 2013 Campus Sustainability Council Report. The Council recommended a new goal based off of existing reduction goals and progress having met the 2010 benchmark.

The new goal calls for a 10 to 25 percent reduction of emissions below 1990 levels by 2020, in line with Massachusetts state goals outlined in the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008.

Tufts also committed to a 3% reduction of waste each year.

**2013** A Transportation Working Group was created to coordinate updates to ground transportation across Tufts' three Massachusetts campuses. Faculty, staff and students worked together to implement programs designed to comply with state and local regulations, to reduce the costs of Tufts vehicle ownership, to manage university vehicles in accordance with industry best practices, and to address the transportation needs of students and employees.

**2014** A photovoltaic system (solar panels) was installed on the top of the roof of Dowling Hall on the Medford/Somerville Campus

**2015** The Collaborative Learning and Innovation Center (CLIC) was completed and was accredited LEED silver.

The space reuses a century-old factory building and incorporates stunning sustainable design.

**2015** A consultant was hired to compile a comprehensive Transportation Demand Strategies Report on strategies to make commuting to any of Tufts' Massachusetts easier and more sustainable. View the [full report](https://sustainability.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/TDM-Report-April-2015.pdf) from April 2015.

**2015** Tufts was re-certified with a Silver Rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS), developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). Certifications last for three years.

**2015** In December 2015, the Tufts School of Medicine and Public Health joined 47 other schools in signing the President’s Health Educators Climate Commitment, in recognition of the health impacts of climate change and in dedication to educating students to address those impacts.

**2016** On April 21, 2016, President Tony Monaco signed the [Second Nature Climate Commitment](https://bit.ly/2Mk6Rpd), an integrated climate commitment for university leaders on carbon neutrality and resilience.

**2016** Following the May 2016 conference on Resilient Building Codes, the Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning endorsed the White House Educators Commitment on Resilient Design as an ACSA (Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) member. The statement defines resilience as "the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events."

**2016** In Fall 2016, the Food Systems & Nutrition Minor was officially launched within the Environmental Studies Program of the College of Arts & Sciences.

**2017** The Science and Engineering Complex (SEC) was completed and received LEED Gold status, making it the 6th LEED certified building on campus.

**2017** The student-focused Eco-Reps program expanded to the SMFA campus, with its first SMFA-based Eco-Rep in Beacon Street residence halls.

**2017** In the 2017-2018 Academic Year, a group faculty, staff and students at the SMFA started the Sustainability Task Force, the first green-team on that campus.

**2017** A photovoltaic system (solar panels), which had started construction in 2015, was activated on the Grafton campus in 2017, at the Cummings School of Veterinary Sciences.

**2018** In May 2018, MassRIDES, a program of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, awarded Tufts University a Spotlight Award, Honorable Mention, for Excellence in Commuter Options. This award is given to companies and organizations that promote and facilitate sustainable commuting options to their employees.

**2018** To adhere to the Second Nature Climate Commitment, a Community Resilience Building workshop was held for the Medford/Somerville campus in May 2018.

**2018** The Green Fund had a soft launch in summer 2018, before moving to yearly application cycles in which students, staff, faculty and alumni of the university can apply for funding to implement sustainability projects for the Tufts community.

**2018** The Central Energy Plant (CEP), a co-generation plant, was completed in 2018. The CEP is estimated to reduce the Medford/Somerville campus greenhouse gas emissions by 14% due to the energy efficient co-generators and boilers. The waste heat generated during the fuel burning process is harnessed to heat and cool water for use in campus buildings.

**2018** Photovoltaic systems (solar panels) were installed on Hodgdon and Lewis Halls, of the Medford/Somerville Campus.

**2018** The Science and Engineering Complex (SEC), which had been certified LEED Gold in 2017, had a photovoltaic system (solar panels) installed on top of its roof in 2018.

**2019** Tufts was re-certified for a third time with a Silver Rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS), developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). Certifications last for three years.

**2019** Greenhouse gas emissions for the entirety of Tufts University’s operations were measured at 12% below 1990 levels. This achievement fulfills two previous emissions reductions goals:

To be 10% below 1990 levels by 2020, as part of the New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Action Plan, signed by Tufts President Laurence Bacow in 2003.

To be 10-25% low 1990 levels by 2020, as recommended by the 2013 Campus Sustainability Council, following the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008.

**2019** A photovoltaic system (solar panels) was installed on the top of the Gantcher Center on the Medford/Somerville Campus.

# 2020s

**2020** A Community Resilience Building workshop was held for the Tufts Boston campuses (Health Sciences and SMFA) in January 2020, to adhere to the Second Nature Climate Commitment.

**2020** In March 2020, the Medford/Somerville campus was certified as an affiliate of the Bee Campus USA program, making Tufts the first urban educational institution in Massachusetts to receive this certification.

**2020** Ecosystem Energy Services, specialists in deep energy retrofits, were engaged by the university in 2020 to refine and outline a clear pathway to decarbonize the energy system on the Medford/Somerville campus. In July 2020, Ecosystem released a Carbon Neutrality Actionable Plan with short, medium and long-term objectives.

**2020** After two years of continued successes, SMFA Dean Nancy Bauer recognized the SMFA Sustainability Task Force as the standing SMFA Sustainability Committee, enabling the work of dedicated faculty, staff and students to have greater impact at the school.