



Researchers estimate approximately 8 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the world's oceans each year. Picture by Nery Orellana, Cal State LA.

Cal State LA goes plastic-free with straws, bags for sustainability

Cal State LA has banned the use of plastic straws and bags, a major step in an ambitious initiative to become a zero-waste university.

As of April 8, food vendors at Cal State LA are no longer offering plastic straws or carryout bags. Instead, paper alternatives will be available.

The move is part of a new California State University system policy that aims to eliminate single-use plastic straws and plastic bags and water bottles on all 23 campuses by 2023 to support the CSU's sustainability efforts. Styrofoam food service items will be phased out by 2021, and the use of single-use plastic water bottles will end in 2023.

Researchers estimate approximately 8 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the world's oceans each year. Such waste negatively affects hundreds of marine species, including sea turtles, with more than 80% of debris-related harm associated with plastic, according to the California Coastal Commission.

"Supporting the fight against plastic pollution is an important facet of the university's sustainability efforts and aligns with our commitment to engagement, service, and the public good," said Cal State LA President William A. Covino.

Cal State LA is informing the university community of the new plastic ban through a banner and an informational video in the campus food court, notices near Salazar Café, social media, and university newsletters.

The plastic-free initiative is the latest in Cal State LA's award-winning sustainability efforts, which are directed by Facilities and Planning, Design, and Construction in the Division of Administration and

Finance. The university has a goal of moving to 90% waste diversion by 2026 and zero waste by 2036. Zero waste means managing products, services, and processes to systematically reduce and eventually eliminate the volume of waste and materials, as well as conserve and recover all resources without burning or burying. These thresholds will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with waste sent to landfills.

In 2018, Cal State LA Facilities and Planning, Design, and Construction received a Best Practice Award from the CSU for addressing energy efficiency in a retrofitting project of Salazar Hall.

The Cal State LA Hydrogen Research and Fueling Facility was the first in the world to sell hydrogen fuel by the kilogram directly to consumers. Using renewable energy resources, the facility provides fuel for electric vehicles that will only emit water vapor emissions.

The university also recently unveiled a new fleet of zero-emission fuel cell hydrogen vehicles for use by students, faculty, and staff. The new WaiveCar vehicles are available for no cost for the first two hours, and each additional hour of use is \$5.99. Vehicles can be driven on daily trips within a 30-mile radius of the university.

Cal State LA's Green Revolving Fund provides funding for students, faculty, and staff to support projects that promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, waste reduction, and other sustainability initiatives that can reduce utilities consumption and generate cost savings. Learn more about the CSU's sustainability policy on the system website.

Gala to raise funds at Westmoreland Academy



Past Commander Michael Berru (left), American Legion Post 139, Alhambra, and 18th District Chaplain Lionel Moreno visit the grave site of Pvt. John Howard Strain at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial in Belleau, Northern France. The American Legion Post 139 is named in Mr. Strain's honor. He was killed during WWI. The cemetery is located at the foot of the hill where the Battle of Belleau Wood was fought, with many American fatalities.

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