

University of New Hampshire
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When I became president of the University of New Hampshire, I was proud that my predecessor's early signing of the President's Climate Commitment had placed UNH in the leadership circle and made us the first land-grant university in New England to sign. But I was even more proud of UNH's broad commitment to being a climate protection campus and a model sustainable learning community. We were already engaged in significant emissions reductions, integrative research, interdisciplinary curricula, and broad-based engagement efforts related to climate and energy before the ACUPCC. At UNH, we organize everything we do around sustainability, and the ACUPCC is a key part of this commitment.

Signing the commitment gave our already motivated faculty, staff, and students one more reminder that as a leader in sustainability we must continually ensure that our curriculum, operations, research, and engagement efforts are responsive to the challenges we face today. For instance, our campus-wide Energy Task Force – the group responsible for implementing the ACUPCC – brought green building standards from a long-time discussion to a formal commitment, thanks to the ACUPCC. In our November 2007 report, UNH pledged to modify our building standards to ensure that future new construction and major renovation projects achieve the equivalent of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standards.

Later this year, UNH will become the first university in the nation to use renewable landfill gas as a primary energy source, reducing our emissions an estimated 60 percent below 1990 levels. This landfill gas project will produce up to 85 percent of the campus's power from a renewable source -- and was underway even before we signed the President's Climate Commitment. This is but one example of how UNH's participation in the ACUPCC goes beyond formal pledges of future actions. The landfill gas project reflects our longstanding commitment -- indeed, our obligation -- to build a truly sustainable community.

