

ENVIRONMENT

GOAL Protect and enhance our natural environment for current residents and future generations.

City implements comprehensive natural resource management system

So that...

Kirkland protects and enhances its natural environment

So that...

Current and future citizens of Kirkland enjoy a healthy natural environment and resources

MEASURE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Target
Compliance with NPDES Stormwater Permits	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Recycling Diversion Rate ¹	50.1%	52%	53.3%	52.7%	53.7%	Increase
City building electricity use (kilowatt/hour)	2,581,213	2,674,348	2,669,158	2,775,022	2,494,101	Decrease
City building natural gas usage (therm)	55,557	66,795	61,944	62,237	103,196	Decrease
Tree canopy coverage	36%	40.7%	*	**	**	40%
Waste entering landfill from residences	13,726 tons	17,861 tons	22,109 tons	22,033 tons	21,840 tons	Annual 2.5% decrease
Annual reduction in City's greenhouse gas emissions as a percent of 2005 levels	*	38%	*	21%	14%	80% below 2005 levels by 2050

¹ Diversion rate-percent of waste materials diverted from the landfill to be recycled, composted or reused. Includes single family and multi-family residences.

* No data available due to data collection occurring less than annually.

**Not measured since City hit 40% target

HOW DO WE MEASURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit compliance encompasses a wide range of actions the City undertakes to improve surface water quality. Recycling diversion rates and waste entering the landfill measure the effect of the City's waste reduction efforts. High resolution satellite imagery and remote sensing and geographic information system (GIS) mapping is used to determine the amount of tree leaf surface covering a large area. Urban tree canopy coverage is a gauge of growth balanced with development and natural resource protection. Low canopy coverage is linked to increased flooding, energy use and urban heat island effects and a decline in air quality.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The recycling diversion rate increased to 53.7% which represents the amount of waste that was not sent to landfills, but recycled, from both single and multi-family residences (this does not count commercial recycling). Single family housing recycling diversion rates continue to be one of the highest for King County reflecting the City's focus and citizen efforts to recycle more items that would otherwise end up in a landfill. The reduction in waste entering landfills decreased in 2014, (though not by the 2.5% target), which also reflects the community's efforts toward reducing waste.

Electricity usage in City buildings decreased by over 280,000 kilowatts per hour, though the natural gas usage increased. This was due in large part to the construction and addition of the Kirkland Justice Center. Tree canopy coverage has reached its goal of 40% so the new goal is to maintain and support the current tree canopy.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Kirkland's Urban Forestry Strategic Management Plan was adopted in summer 2013 to provide a blueprint to record the tree canopy we currently have, craft policy and regulations to protect the trees, provide resources for maintenance and support, and create a network of community groups and individuals engaged in Urban Forestry issues around the region. Some key strategies of the plan are:

- Inventory of public trees in the parks and the right-of-way
- Host free workshops on tree codes and procedures
- Partner with the Green Kirkland Partnership 20 Year Forest & Natural Areas Restoration Plan

Education and new program implementation for recycling has been the focus for single family residences for the past few years. Increasing diversion rates illustrate the success of these programs. This year ended with a stronger emphasis on creating support programs and standards for multi-family residences to aid in recycling efforts in that sector.



STYROFEST

About once a month a unique recycling center appears at one of the City's facilities to collect all of those squeaky, foam shapes that keep our electronics, furniture, and other items dent free during transport. The City of Kirkland has established Styrofest, a monthly collection event for residents to bring their Styrofoam items in for recycling instead of sending them to the landfill. The events accept all sorts of Styrofoam shapes, as well as plastic bags and film. This program was launched in winter of 2013 and has gained momentum and fame growing from a first event collection of 20 cubic yards to an average of about 75 cubic yards of Styrofoam per event. It's estimated that through the Styrofest events Kirkland has diverted over 1,500 cubic yards of Styrofoam from being trashed in the landfill.