

The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF)
Water Conservation in the Greek Community - Abstract
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Approvals: East Bay MUD, City Councilmember Gordon Wozniak's Office, Green Campus

Background

The Greek system at UC Berkeley comprises 33 fraternity chapters and 13 sorority chapters, with 29 housed fraternities and 13 housed sororities. Approximately 1,650 students live in these houses—6.6% of the total undergraduate population. Greening the Greeks is an ASUC-funded student organization that promotes sustainability efforts—in the form of efficiency upgrades and education-based behavioral changes—within the Greek system. Last semester, Greening the Greeks successfully focused on two critical sustainability issues, energy efficiency and solid waste reduction, and now will focus on water conservation. Many Greek houses have not had any sort of water conservation education, and the appliances that use water in the houses—showerheads, faucets, toilets, dishwashers and washing machines—have not been made to be as efficient as they could be. Greening the Greeks aims to involve at least 25 houses in a water reduction competition and see an average of 15% overall water usage reduction. This proposal is a request for funding from TGIF for the appliances and accessories that will be installed in houses, the signage that will be used for the education component of the campaign, and student TGIF liaisons/interns that will be responsible for doing the equipment installations, collecting the information and reporting back to TGIF.

Project Summary

The water reduction effort will manifest as a competition between Greek chapters, similar to the TGIF-funded Green Cup Competition, in which they compete to reduce their water consumption per capita to the lowest level. The competition will take place during November 2012, and will be separated into two divisions: the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) and the Panhellenic Council (PHC). Greening the Greeks will launch a multi-faceted educational program about water efficiency, focusing on the particular significance of water conservation in California. The educational program will unfold through presentations given by Sustainability Chairs during October and November 2012 to the chapters they represent, and attractive, interesting, and strategically placed signage in the chapter houses. After the chapters have begun their educational campaigns, TGIF interns hired and supervised by the Greening the Greeks Co-Presidents will install high-efficiency appliances and accessories (sink aerators, low-flow showerheads and dual-flush toilet adapter kits) in participating chapters. The interns will photograph the installations and check that they are in place mid-competition. The interns will also use dye tabs to check for leaks in toilets as well as implement a system for members reporting repairs in each house. The winner of each division of the competition will be rewarded with funding for a water-reduction project or appliance of their choosing, such as a water-efficient washing machine or dishwasher, or a rainwater capture system.

The competition will be tested with a one-month pilot program during September 2012. Two parallel competitions will take place between 2-3 fraternities and 2-3 sororities. The three interns hired for the semester will be in place to support the pilot program. Green Campus has provided a recommendation for showerheads based on their interactions with RSSP, which will be tested

along with several others during the pilot to determine which is best for the general competition. Green Campus has offered broad collaborative assistance, and will also assist in distributing a survey to the pilot chapters about their water usage reduction. The education and installation schedule for the remaining competition will be adjusted based on these survey results, as well as the empirical reductions demonstrated by the water bills.

Measurement/Logistics

The success of the project and the winner of the competition will be determined by establishing baseline water consumptions from the last two years that the houses will try to improve upon. Chapters will submit their water bills and live-in population figures for November of 2010 and 2011 (or September in the case of the pilot). The two bills will be averaged together and divided by that semester’s population to create a baseline water consumption per capita. During and after the conclusion of the competition, the chapters will submit their current live-in figures and their September and/or November 2012 water bills. The TGIF interns will calculate the percentage of water consumption reduction each house achieves against their baselines to discern the comparative success of each house. The winner of each division of the competition will be the chapter that reduces its water consumption per capita to the lowest level, demonstrating at least 10% reduction of the baseline. In the Spring 2013 semester, the TGIF Liaisons will continue to work with new houses to install accessories, collect water bills, and measure benefit of installations, as well as coordinate the water reduction projects with the two winning chapters.

Additional Support and Funding Sources

City Councilmember Gordon Wozniak’s office has already pledged \$1000 to support this project, Green Campus has offered broad collaborative support, and the East Bay Municipal Utility District has been contacted regarding rebate opportunities. Greening the Greeks will be seeking partnerships and support from other sources and campus organizations as well.

Item	Cost/unit	September Pilot Quantity	September Pilot Cost	November Competition Quantity	November Competition Cost
Low Flow (1.5 Gallon per minute) showerhead	\$30.00	70	\$2,100	180	\$5,400
Faucet aerators	\$10.00	150	\$1,500	300	\$3,000
Multi-flush toilet adapter kits	\$30.00	75	\$2,250	240	\$7,200
Signs for water conservation	\$10	30	\$300	100	\$1,000
Installation fee of water conservation project	Cap on installation of TGIF approved project for winning chapter	2 x \$500	\$1,000	2 x \$2000	\$4,000
TGIF Liaison/Installation intern	\$500 stipend	1 intern	\$500	2 interns	\$1,000
		October Pilot Total	\$7,650	November Competition Total	\$21,600