



# Sustainability Achievements of the **2011 NCAA FINAL FOUR** in Houston, Texas

In an effort to reduce our carbon footprint at the Final Four, ecologically intelligent practices have been integrated into the event's planning and production. The paper products and other supplies we have bought and the facilities and services we are relying on have all been selected with a sensitivity towards reducing the threats we all face from global warming, deforestation, toxic wastes, and hazardous chemicals in our water and food. After all, without clean water and clean air, we cannot play basketball. As one of the most culturally influential sporting events in the United States, the NCAA Final Four producers take our obligations to society very seriously. This year we are honored to have teamed up with LG Electronics USA, Waste Management, Reliant Park, the City of Houston, George R. Brown Convention Center, and the Natural Resources Defense Council to launch the long journey we need to take to reduce our collective ecological footprint. I hope you will join us in supporting this valuable endeavor this year, and for years to come.

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## RELIANT STADIUM OPERATIONS:

### Facility

- **Environmental Assessment:** A Sustainability Performance Assessment was conducted to gauge current sustainability practices and opportunities for improvement. This Sustainability Performance Assessment was used to develop the baseline data against which we are measuring our achievements.

### Energy

- **Reduced Global Warming Emissions:** Carbon offsets into wind and solar power projects for Reliant Stadium were purchased from Bonneville Environmental Foundation resulting in avoided global warming emissions totaling 210 U.S. tons in carbon dioxide equivalents, representing about 509,000 auto miles.

### Food/Drink

- **Promotion of Reuse instead of Discarding:** Unused prepared food is being donated to local food banks and other non-profits.



## Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** The number of recycling containers was increased by nearly 600, matching every trash can with a recycling bin. Anticipated diversion of recyclables is between 5 to 7 tons,\* including cardboard, paper, bottles and cans.
- **Promotion of Composting:** For the first time, Reliant Stadium has begun a food waste composting program for food preparation and food waste from suites, in two of their largest kitchens, and four suite kitchens during the Final Four. More than 25 containers (donated by Norseman Environmental Products) are being used in back of the house to implement this program.

## BRACKET TOWN (GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER):

### Facility

- **Promotion of Ecologically Superior Spaces:** The George R. Brown Convention Center is in the process of applying for LEED Silver for Existing Buildings Operations & Maintenance.
- **Environmental Assessment:** Conducted Sustainability Performance Assessment to gauge current sustainability practices and opportunities for improvement. This Sustainability Performance Assessment was used to develop the baseline data against which we are measuring our achievements.

### Energy

- **Reduced Global Warming Emissions:** With support from the City of Houston, 100 percent of the energy used by George R. Brown Convention Center is supplied by renewable wind power.
- **Reduced Global Warming Emissions:** Solar panels are being used to operate emergency power systems.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Energy efficient water pumps recently installed at the facility use 60 percent less energy than the previous pumps.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Water chillers recently installed at the facility provide cold water to chill all walk in refrigerators and freezers, eliminating the need for individual refrigeration units. In addition, this system powers on-site ice-makers that eliminate the need for trucking in ice.

### Food/Drink

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** The George R. Brown Convention Center is composting between 1 to 1.5 tons of food waste from all catered events and food preparations during the Final Four.
- **Local Sourcing:** 15 to 20 percent of food purchases are from local sources.
- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All cooking oils are recycled into bio-diesel.
- **Source Reduction and Reuse instead of Buying New and Discarding; Promotion of Recycling and Composting instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All disposable serveware used at events were bio-based and compostable; napkins were made from 100 percent recycled content.

### Paper

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All copy paper purchased incorporates 30 percent post-consumer recycled content and FSC-certified fiber. Paper towels incorporate 95 percent total recycled content with 15 percent post-consumer content, and bathroom tissue incorporates 80 percent total recycled content with 20 percent post-consumer content.
- **Paper Use Reduction:** All directional and announcement signage are digital.



### Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** More than 100 recycling containers were added at the facility to collect recyclables from attendees. The George R. Brown Convention Center expects to recycle more than 2 tons\* of recyclables during the activities of the Final Four.
- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All plastic trash bags purchased incorporate recycled content.

### Purchasing

- **Toxics Reduction:** All cleaning products are Green Seal certified.

## PRINTED MATERIALS:

### Paper

- **Use of Ecologically Superior Paper:** As with last year's program, Final Four Event programs are printed on high quality coated paper with at least 10 percent recycled content and using soy-based ink
- **Paper Use Reduction:** For the first time, the NCAA Final Four will have a mobile application to help fans locate events, find restaurants, make reservations, etc. The application can be found at [www.finalfourmobile.com](http://www.finalfourmobile.com) and [www.NCAAFinalFour.com](http://www.NCAAFinalFour.com).
- **Paper Use Reduction:** Eliminated printed fan guides.

## PRESS ROOM:

### Paper

- **Use of Ecologically Superior paper:** All paper used in the press room incorporates 30 percent post-consumer recycled content.

### Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** The Press Room is recycling paper, bottles, and cans.

## HOTELS:

### Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All hotels in city-wide room block were encouraged to recycle and sustain their programs after the Final Four weekend. 79 percent of responding hotels currently have some form of a recycling program.

## TRANSPORTATION:

### Energy

- **Reduced Global Warming Emissions:** Green-E Certified Carbon offsets have been purchased through Carbon Fund.org to offset bus travel between hotels, venues, and Reliant Stadium.
- **Reduced Global Warming Emissions:** Buses will shut down if there is a wait of 10 minutes or longer to reduce idling time.

### Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** All special event buses have recycling containers.
- **Source Reduction:** Event schedules are displayed on bus monitors eliminating the need for physical copies.



## ELECTRONICS RECYCLING:

### Waste

- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration and Promotion of Domestic E-waste Processing:** The NCAA, the Houston Final Four Local Organizing Committee, Waste Management and LG Electronics USA held an e-waste collection event on March 26th, collecting more than 25,000 lbs of electronic waste that are being disassembled and processed for recycling in the United States.
- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration and Promotion of Domestic E-waste Processing:** Leading up to the Final Four, Reliant Stadium recycled 20,000 pounds worth of CRT TVs when they were replaced with flat screen monitors; the CRT TVs are being disassembled and processed for recycling in the United States.

## TREE PLANTING:

- **Tree Planting:** The NCAA and the Houston Final Four Local Organizing Committee planted 68 native Mexican Plum trees in Weiss Park, commemorating the number of teams in the tournament. A permanent placard is being placed to recognize the event.

## DISCOVERY GREEN—BIG DANCE:

### Facility

- **Promotion of Ecologically Superior Spaces:** Discovery Green is a LEED Gold rated facility.

### Waste


- **Promotion of Recycling instead of Landfilling or Incineration:** More than 100 recycling containers are being distributed to collect recyclables.
- **Recycling Education:** Coca-Cola is using their Recycling Educational Exhibit at the event to promote recycling.



\* Certain data will be unavailable until after the event. Best estimates are given where possible.

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 Printed on recycled paper