

# Sustainability Performance Plan

## FY 2021

### Department of Revenue Services

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Senior Sustainability Officer

Approved by Mark Boughton  
Commissioner

*This report was written in compliance with  
section 5 of Executive Order 1.*



# EO 1 Background

On April 24, 2019, Governor Lamont launched the GreenerGov CT initiative by signing Executive Order 1 (EO 1) which directs Executive Branch agencies to advance environmental leadership and cost savings for taxpayers by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other sustainability objectives in energy use in buildings and vehicles, water use, and waste disposal.

EO 1 calls on agencies to recommit to and expand the state's Lead by Example (LBE) program to reduce the operating costs and environmental impacts of state government facilities and operations. EO 1 builds on the foundation of the state's LBE program by setting new sustainability goals, listed below, for Executive Branch agencies and invoking deeper levels of commitment and participation.

## **GHG**

45% reduction in  
GHG emissions  
below 2001 levels

## **WATER**

10% reduction in  
water consumption  
from a FY20 baseline

## **WASTE**

25% reduction in  
waste disposal from a  
FY20 baseline

Since the GreenerGov CT initiative was launched, significant progress has been made towards laying the groundwork for expanded LBE initiatives in the future: governance structures were established, baseline data was collected, and financing and project strategies were developed. Additionally, agencies reported completing or making progress on 90+ sustainability projects in FY20 in the annual agency Sustainability Performance Plans. Sustainability Performance Plans are plans drafted each year by Senior Sustainability Officers to detail agency progress and necessary goals, actions, and responsible parties to achieve the targets set in EO 1.

In 2020 and 2021, agencies continued to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. As many agencies returned to the office in 2021, the GreenerGov CT leadership encouraged agencies to use the return to the office from teleworking as an opportunity to refresh staff practices and to take on new sustainability initiatives. The FY21 Sustainability Performance Plan includes a summary of sustainability actions initiated as part of the "Returning to the Office Greener" call to action.

# EO 1 Participation Overview

## DRS's Mission

The mission of the Department of Revenue Services is to instill public confidence in the integrity and fairness of tax collection; achieve the highest level of voluntary taxpayer compliance; continuously improve agency performance; contribute to the fiscal and economic well-being of the state; and provide a positive and professional workplace.

## FY21 Participation Overview

DRS has representation on the Sustainability Steering Committee and on the Reporting Project Team that created the template used by state agencies in submitting their Sustainability Performance Plans and agency snapshots. This template will allow agencies the ability to track their progress towards meeting sustainability goals.

## Participating Agency Staff

Theresa Peterson, Senior Sustainability Officer  
Filomena Reis, Reporting Project Team Member  
Donald Knybel, Level 1 & 3 Information Supplier  
Richard Barry, Level 2 Information Supplier



## Sustainability Projects

including projects relating to infrastructure improvements or behavioral change that took place in owned, leased, or occupied space and were either in progress or completed in FY21

# Sustainability Projects

## Project 1

**What:** In the last fiscal year, due to the Pandemic, agency staff were required to work remotely. Hundreds of laptops were purchased and distributed, while hundreds of unnecessary desktops and obsolete laptops were released from agency control through the state surplus process.

**Where:** All of the DRS locations but mostly 450 Columbus Blvd.

**Project type:** Behavioral - Waste

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** As the majority of these computers still had useful life left, we were able to distribute the equipment to non-profits as the computers cannot be sold to private individuals or companies.

**Savings:** We purchased over 400 laptops that costs approximately \$1,200 each. We were able to use the COVID Reserve Funds to pay for all of the laptops, monitors, keyboards, etc. in order to allow the majority of our staff to telework. The amount spent on the equipment was over \$512,000.

## Project 2

**What:** The Scanned Mail solution project provides designated DRS Staff with the ability to view and process scanned copies of DRS mail. In FY2022, DRS was fortunate enough to purchase a second scanning machine to increase productivity and reduce any future backlogs of mail processing.

**Where:** All of DRS locations but mostly 450 Columbus Boulevard

**Project type:** Behavioral - Waste

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** The benefit are the reduction in paper distribution, and the efficiency of receiving mail in a timely manner. Having a mail clerk deliver to each floor was time consuming and with staff teleworking, mail would sit in the mail areas for several days without being processed. The scanning of the mail is instantaneous allowing DRS staff to process requests and payments quickly, thereby allowing the staff to remain teleworking.

**Savings:** Unknown. The annual savings could be less work force needed to deliver mail and possibly invoices getting paid in a timely manner rather than occurring late fees on mail that is stationary in the mail areas. The cost savings could be quantified by having healthy staff being able to report to work in keeping DRS operating in a safe manner. It prevents backlog of processing mail when the staff gets infected with COVID-19 and the entire unit has to self-quarantine for 2 weeks, which has occurred on several occasions. The scanning of the white mail has prevented this from occurring again.

# Sustainability Projects cont.

## Project 3

**What:** With the release of our new tax implementation project, taxpayers are now able to file their tax returns electronically via myconneCT. This is a 4 year project in which we have completed year 1 and 2 and getting ready to begin year 3. By year 4, all Connecticut tax types will be available through myconneCT, thereby eliminating paper submissions.

**Where:** Hartford, Waterbury and Norwich offices.

**Project type:** Structural - Combination

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** The reduction of paper tax returns will assist taxpayers to submit their information in a timely manner, thereby allowing refunds to be submitted quicker. DRS continues to offer remote taxpayer assistance, where taxpayers can receive DRS tax assistance from a trained DRS professional in the comfort of their own homes during its normal business hours.

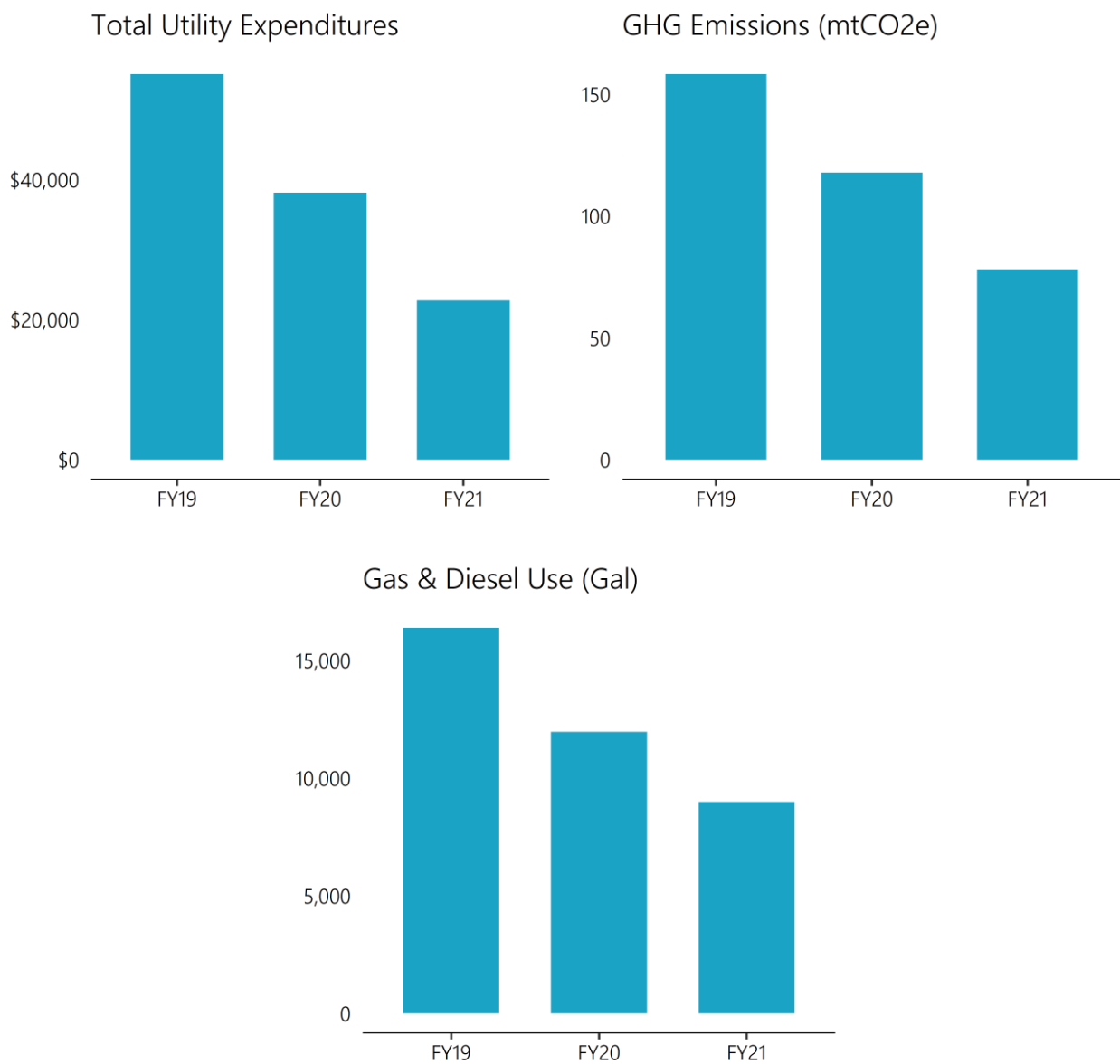
**Savings:** Annual savings would be to DAS for the Walk-In area being closed to the public which allowed the security company to reduce staff needed in this area. It also allowed DAS to reduce services in the parking garages, mailroom areas, break room facilities and water reduction due to reduced staff in the building. Also, the elimination of printing and scanning of tax returns would save on paper, postage and office supplies. The anticipated savings that DRS accrued was approximately \$1.4 million from 2020 to 2021 due to reduced travel, fleet vehicle usage (gas), mileage costs but mostly office supplies across the agency. With over 85-90 percent of the staff teleworking, there has been no need for office supplies.

# Performance Data

The following data was pulled from EnergyCAP, the state’s utility tracking software, on December 9, 2021. Note that utility data on agencies occupying space owned by another state agency may not be linked to their EnergyCAP accounts.

## Data Trends, FY19-FY21

The charts below summarize the total utility expenditures, GHG emissions, and gas/diesel use for DRS for FY19-FY21. Keep in mind that data that is missing or not yet processed in EnergyCAP may cause these numbers to be artificially low.



# Performance Data cont.

## Detailed Utility Use and Cost Data

The table below summarizes the utility use and cost data for DRS for FY19-FY21 according to data pulled from EnergyCAP on December 9, 2021. As mentioned previously, keep in mind that this data may be incomplete.

Commodity	Unit	Use				Cost			
		FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19-21 Change	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19-21 Change
Electric	kWh	62,462	54,446	-	-	\$10,962	\$9,185	-	-
Vehicle Gasoline	Gal	16,390	11,970	8,996	-45.1%	\$44,088	\$28,968	\$22,759	-48.4%
<b>Total GHG Emissions</b>	<b>mtCO2e</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>-50.6%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$55,050</b>	<b>\$38,153</b>	<b>\$22,759</b>	<b>-58.7%</b>

\*Gasoline and diesel costs estimated based on average monthly cost from EIA.gov, \$2.53 for gasoline and \$2.81 for diesel in FY21; \$2.42 for gasoline and \$2.96 for diesel in FY20; \$2.69 for gasoline and \$3.25 for diesel in FY19.

# Return to the Office Greener

In FY21, the GreenerGov CT leadership encouraged agencies to use the return to the office from teleworking due to the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to refresh staff practices and habits and to take on new sustainability initiatives. Eleven actions were presented as possible strategies for a more sustainable return to the office, and agencies were asked to pick three actions not already in process. The actions for DRS are highlighted below.

## Returning to the Office Greener Suggested Actions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Identify agency vehicles which could be transitioned to electric models.   |   |
| 2. Have a No-Cost retro commissioning scoping study to identify HVAC improvement and controls opportunities.          |   |
| 3. Sign up a building to participate in Eversource's Strategic Energy Management program.                             |   |
| 4. Have a free building energy audit performed to identify basic opportunities to upgrade lighting or weatherization. |   |
| 5. Perform a water audit to identify opportunities for fixture replacement or conservation actions.                   |   |
| 6. Check for water leaks using the Fix-A-Leak Checklist.  | ✓ |
| 7. Assess the feasibility of hosting solar on your buildings or property.   |   |
| 8. Optimize your dumpster size and pickup schedule.   | ✓ |
| 9. Start an organics diversion/collection program.  |   |
| 10. Tune up recycling practices.  | ✓ |
| 11. Make a Green Team of staff invested in making space and operations more sustainable.                              |   |
| 12. Other actions   |   |

## Additional details on the return to the office

The agency implemented the "hoteling" system for employees to return to the office with an automated application process.



# COVID-19 Impact

## Impact of COVID-19 on DRS's ability to make progress on the goals of EO 1 in FY21

COVID-19 has been challenging in keeping the staff social distanced while maintaining Level One workers in the buildings. Hoteling has helped but only if we have 50% capacity.

## COVID-19 changes that have led to a positive sustainability outcome that will continue after the pandemic

Strategically evaluating building footprint needed for agency work	✓
Reassessing agency fleet	
Holding virtual meetings as a more regular practice	✓
Increased telework as a regular practice	✓
No changes to report	
Other	

## Additional details on positive sustainability outcomes and how they will be continued after the pandemic

We established an automated office occupancy application that other state agencies have copied from us, including DAS. It allows staff to reserve a cubicle for the entire week that they come into the building. It also serves as our contact tracing form in the event we have a position COVID-19 incident.

# Future Planning

## Status of FY20 Plans

	Progress has been made	Progress has stalled	Plans have been completed.	Stated plans no longer a priority	Other
GHG Reduction				✓	
Water Use Reduction	✓				
Waste Reduction	✓				

## Sustainability Plans Beyond FY21

### GHG Reduction

We can visit the use of electric vehicles for our drivers once the state has procured the vehicles and has the ability to install recharging stations at our location.

### Water Use Reduction

Water reduction has occurred due to 50% capacity during FY2022 at our locations.

### Waste Reduction

We continue to improve on reducing paper use. We are in the 2nd year of a 4 year program to get taxpayers to file electronically rather than submit on paper.

# Resources Needed

## Barriers encountered while making EO 1 progress in FY21

Funding	✓
Staffing	✓
Technical expertise	✓
No barriers encountered	
Other	

## Additional details on barriers encountered

With a high attrition rate, it has been difficult in keeping the staffing levels. With every new hire, two are retiring. Also, our IT department struggles to hire new employees in their specialty fields.

## Specific type of support or resources needed to make progress on future sustainability projects

Quicker approvals for new hires and funding. Better communication between state agencies regarding mutual projects.

## Additional info on DRS's participation in EO 1 during FY21

With the 1st year of myconneCT in place, we saw a huge increase in taxpayers submitting their tax returns electronically. FY2022 should show an even larger increase as additional tax types get added into the implementation.