

Sustainability Performance Plan

FY 2021

Department of Veterans Affairs

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Senior Sustainability Officer

Approved by Thomas J. Saadi
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

DVA's Mission

Enhance the lives of Connecticut's Veterans by compassionately and professionally providing:

- Residential and rehabilitation services for individual Veterans and Families
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Advocacy and Assistance to Veterans, their spouses or eligible dependents in obtaining benefits to which they may be entitled under Federal, State, and local laws.
- Cemetery and Memorial services for Veterans and eligible dependents
- Collaborate with Federal, State and local agencies. Veteran Service Organizations, community based partners, volunteers and Veteran supporters.

FY21 Participation Overview

Engaged an engineer firm for a pre-design study to evaluate alternatives to replace central steam heating with a GHG reducing option or options. Also, worked with utility programs on numerous energy reduction measures to save GHG.

Participating Agency Staff

Commissioner Thomas J Saadi, Esq
Briana Mitchell, Fiscal Administrative Manager
Shirin Khan, Planner



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: Study viability of GHG reducing alternatives for central steam hot water and heat generation.

Where: CT DVA Main Campus, 287 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Project type: Structural - GHG - Building energy efficiency **Status:** In progress in FY 2021

Benefits: Reduce GHG. Reduce energy costs. Reduce operating costs.

Project 2

What: Install electrical submeters to measure consumption and determine potential savings and GHG reduction

Where: CT DVA Main Campus, 287 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Project type: Structural - GHG - Building energy efficiency **Status:** In progress in FY 2021

Benefits: Proper alignment of energy efficiency project options to attain the greatest savings.

Project 3

What: Perform a study of steam trap functionality and replacement of all non-functional steam traps

Where: CT DVA Main Campus, 287 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Project type: Structural - GHG - Building energy efficiency **Status:** In progress in FY 2021

Benefits: Reduce steam waste leading ultimately to less requirement for steam and natural gas to generate the steam. Estimated 1,200 steam traps to survey with potential for more than half reaching a non-functional assessment.

Project 4

What: Replace interior and exterior lighting with motion sensing, two level, LED fixtures.

Where: CT DVA Main Campus, 287 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Project type: Structural - GHG - Building energy efficiency **Status:** In progress in FY 2021

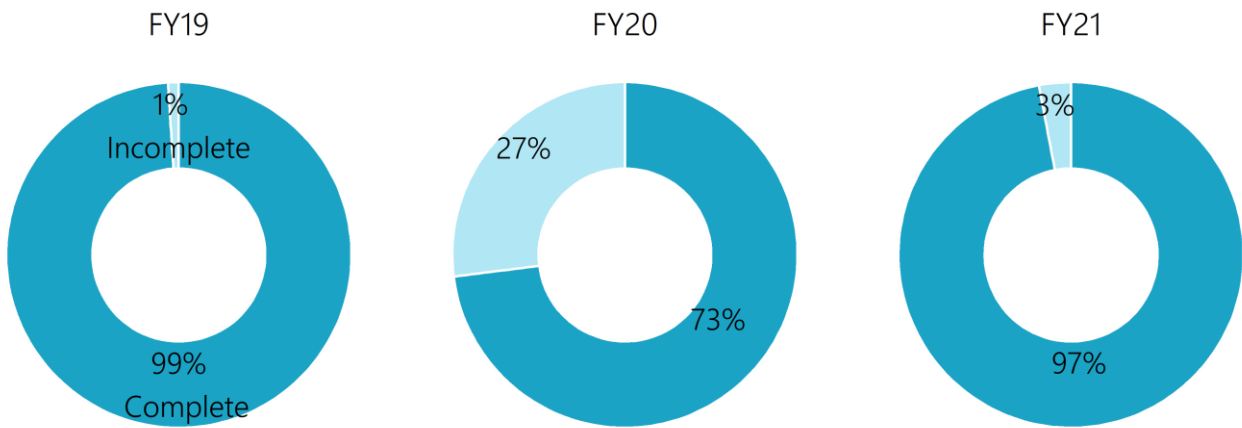
Benefits: Large reduction of electricity consumption.

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.

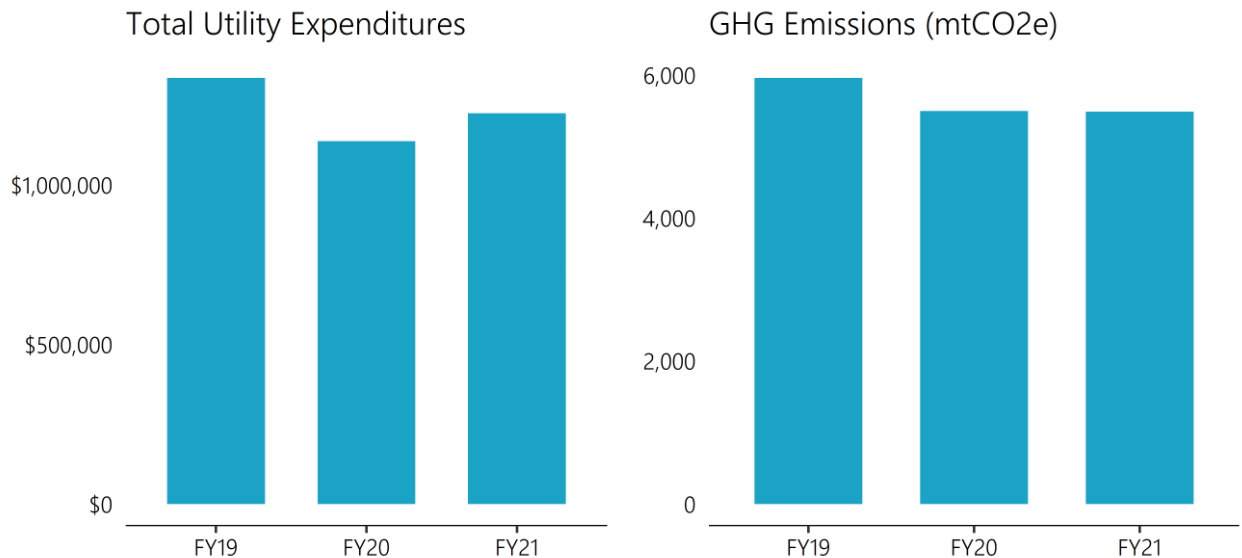
Data Completeness

The charts below display the estimated percent of utility data for DVA entered into EnergyCAP. More recently uploaded data may still be 'in queue' awaiting processing by EnergyCAP and will not be reflected in this report.



Data Trends, FY19-FY21

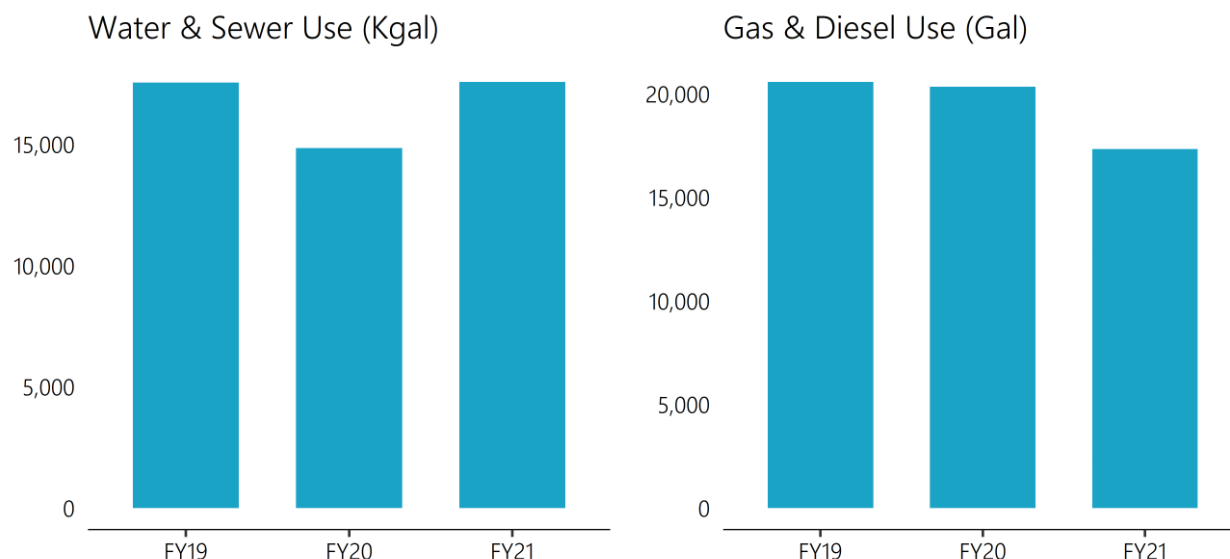
The charts below summarize the total utility expenditures and total GHG emissions for DVA for FY19-FY21. Keep in mind that data that is missing or not yet processed in EnergyCAP may cause these numbers to be artificially low.



Performance Data cont.

Data Trends, FY19-FY21 - Continued

The charts below summarize the water and gas/diesel use for DVA 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.



Detailed Utility Use and Cost Data

The table below summarizes the utility use and cost data for DVA 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	3,687,401	3,449,279	3,497,555	-5.1%	\$536,499	\$492,368	\$506,316	-5.6%
Natural Gas	CCF	848,458	795,507	803,422	-5.3%	\$545,695	\$433,601	\$488,005	-10.6%
Oil	Gal	23,207	12,546	9,591	-58.7%	\$48,802	\$22,316	\$16,081	-67.0%
Vehicle Gasoline	Gal	11,366	12,774	11,666	+2.6%	\$30,575	\$30,913	\$29,515	-3.5%
Vehicle Diesel	Gal	9,205	7,572	5,671	-38.4%	\$29,915	\$22,412	\$15,937	-46.7%
Total GHG Emissions	mtCO2e	5,960	5,496	5,491	-7.9%	-	-	-	-
Water	Kgal	9,317	7,695	9,120	-2.1%	\$98,782	\$89,084	\$109,048	+10.4%
Sewer	Kgal	8,237	7,157	8,459	+2.7%	\$44,746	\$46,382	\$59,164	+32.2%
Total	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,335,014	\$1,137,076	\$1,224,066	-8.3%

*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.

6 - DVA Sustainability Performance Plan

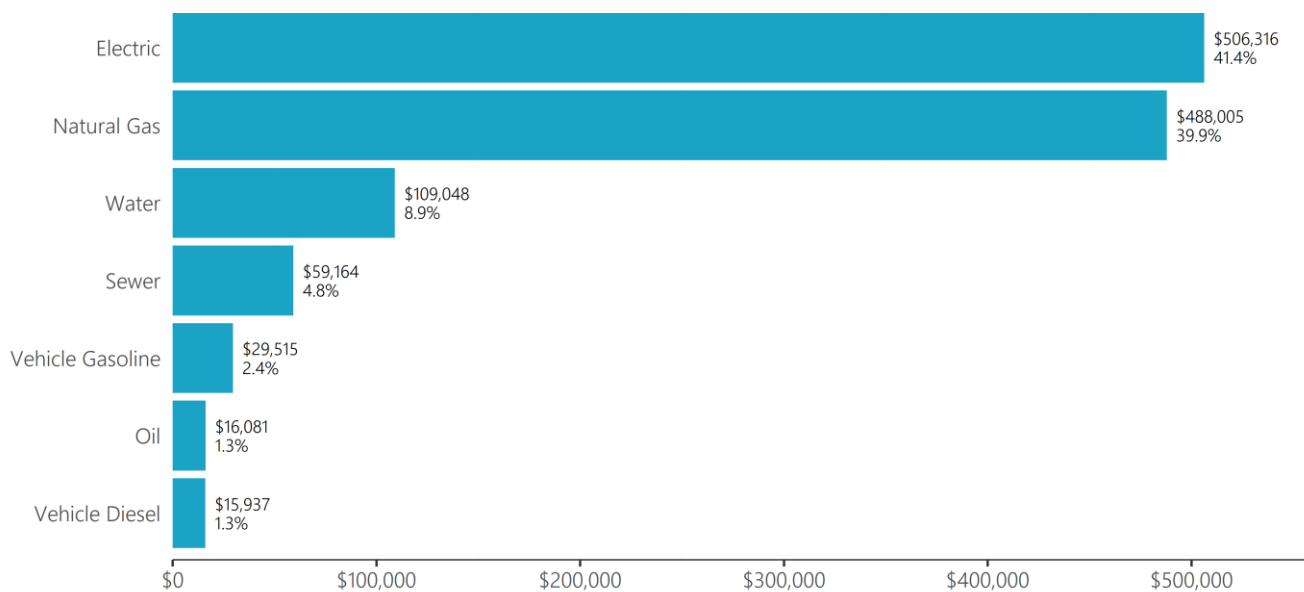
Performance Data cont.

FY21 Data Snapshot

The charts below highlight the breakdown of utility expenditures and GHG emissions by commodity for FY21.

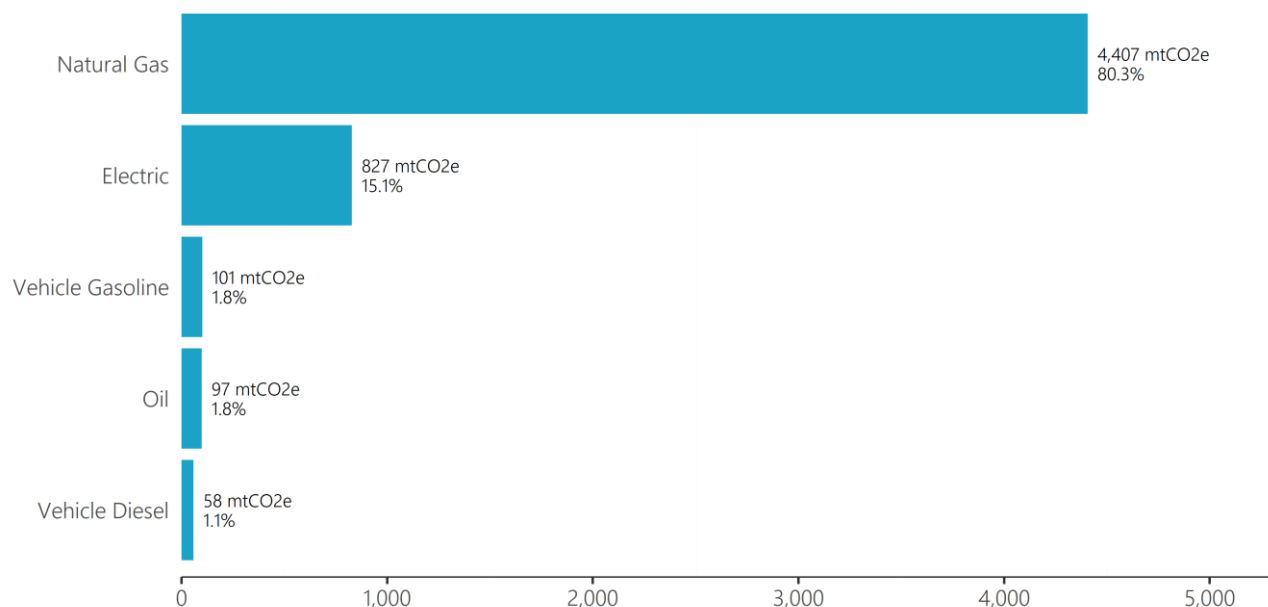
Commodity Cost Breakdown, FY21

The chart below represents the breakdown of commodity costs at DVA in FY21.



GHG Emissions Breakdown, FY21

The chart below represents the breakdown of GHG emissions by commodity at DVA in FY21.



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 DVA 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:

Ensure unneeded lighting is turned off and left on after hours. We increased security patrols after hours to look for water leaks. Building occupation is less now after returning than prior years leading to more leaks to watch for and respond to.

COVID-19 Impact

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

Significant impact.

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	

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

Will review fleet of two buses for energy efficient options. All other vehicles are low mileage. Currently agency has no funding available to upgrade the vehicle fleet.

Water Use Reduction

Continued vigilance on detecting leaks as they occur. Request funding to repair refrigerators that cool with water. Request funding to study the placement of several buildings on an existing water loop from a circa 1930s water loop

Waste Reduction

Continued emphasis on waster reduction across all operations.

Resources Needed

Barriers encountered while making EO 1 progress in FY21

Funding	✓
Staffing	✓
Technical expertise	✓
No barriers encountered	
Other	

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

Funding is the critical aspect. This agency has no funding provided in operating budget specifically for EO1.

Additional info on DVA's participation in EO 1 during FY21

DVA does appreciate the cooperation of DEEP, DAS and OPM to assist in project development during FY21.