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- 2015 News
- 2014 News
- 2013 News
- 2012 News
- 2011 News
- 2010 News
- 2009 News
- 2008 News
- 2007 News
- 2006 News
- 2005 News
- 2004 News
- 2003 News
- Archive

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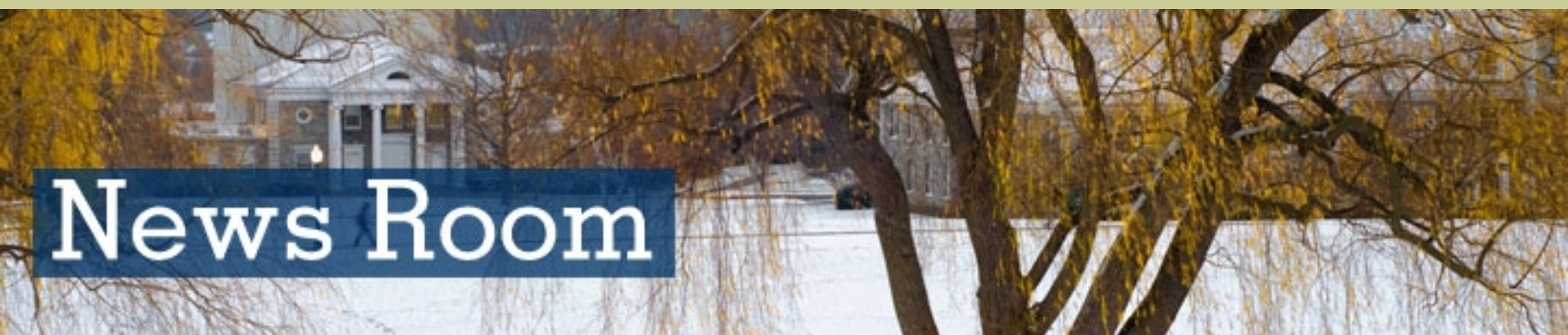


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[Home](#) » [News Room](#) » [News Stories](#) » [2007 News](#) » Middlebury College commits to becoming carbon neutral by 2016

Middlebury College commits to becoming carbon neutral by 2016

May 7, 2007



MIDDLEBURY, Vt. - Middlebury College President Ronald D. Liebowitz announced on Saturday, May 5, that the Middlebury College board of trustees has approved a plan to become a carbon neutral institution by 2016. His announcement followed a meeting of the trustees this weekend where they discussed a written proposal from the Middlebury College student organization MiddShift, as well as supporting recommendations from senior administrators.

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on New England Cable News on carbon neutrality initiative.

MiddShift originally presented its carbon neutrality initiative to the board of trustees in February 2007. That meeting led to the formation of the Carbon Neutrality Advisory Group (CNAG), which includes both students and administrators, to further develop a final written proposal outlining the potential costs, risks and organizational impact of achieving carbon neutrality over the next nine years.

In a 2006 inventory, the college calculated its carbon emissions at 30,000 metric tons, derived from the following: use of fuel oils number six and number two, at 79 percent and 5 percent, respectively; use of liquid propane gas at 2 percent; college-related travel at 10 percent; electricity at 3 percent; and landfill methane from waste disposal at 1 percent. As defined in the approved proposal, the college plans to achieve carbon neutrality through a combination of efforts, including the 2008 completion of a biomass plant, which will be powered by wood chips; operational adjustments such as energy efficient lighting and facility upgrades; and - after all other economically feasible efforts to reduce carbon have been exhausted - the purchase of carbon offsets.

According to Liebowitz, who today joined 207 presidents in signing the [American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment](#) letter, each member of the college community will share in the responsibility for reducing the campus' carbon footprint. "By this important and carefully considered commitment, Middlebury has again taken a leadership role in helping to reduce the emissions of carbon into our environment," he said.

In 2004, the board of trustees approved a recommendation developed by Middlebury faculty, staff and students to reduce the college's carbon emissions to 8 percent below its 1990 levels by 2012. As part of that goal, college administrators established a long term plan to rely on a sustainable, local and renewable fuel source for operating the biomass plant.

According to Dean of Environmental Affairs Nan Jenks-Jay, the college is in an ideal position to build on its 2004 commitment. "Having accomplished what we have so far, we feel confident that now is the time to push

our achievements to the next level. This recent show of trustee support for reaching carbon neutrality is an acknowledgement of the hard work and dedication to the environment that the campus community has already put into practice," she said.

Middlebury College senior Jason Kowalski, a student member of the CNAG, said, "This commitment is an economically viable way to stay at the forefront of environmental leadership. Not only are we neutralizing carbon emissions and contributing to the sustainability of our ecosystem, but we're shifting the way our generation thinks about our energy use." Other recent student-driven initiatives include energy-saving contests among the residence halls, a campaign to reduce the average temperature of buildings on campus by two degrees, and policy adoptions by the student government to increase the use of public transportation to and from campus.

Rick Fritz, chair of the board of trustees, said, "This commitment is, without a doubt, a collective agreement among students, faculty, staff, the administration and the board. The college is a community, first and foremost, and we've embraced this agreement. This achievement will define our institution's environmental leadership for many years to come."