



Sustainability Return-To-Work Recommendations

*** This document is not intended to replace or supersede Health and Safety requirements.***

Now is a critical time to put both safety and sustainability protocols at the forefront. As we return to work, it's important to acknowledge the connection between human health and the health of our planet. Below are important sustainability recommendations to integrate into Return-to-Work Production Protocols for the resiliency of our industry.

PRIORITIZE RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES AND PURCHASING

FOOD / CRAFT SERVICES / CATERING

Due to COVID-19, it is understood that catering and craft service practices must change to protect cast and crew and limit the possible spread of the virus. The objective of the practices below is to allow personal reusable items where safe and select single-use items that have the lowest environmental impacts.

REUSABLES / REFILL STATIONS (WHEN SAFETY PERMITS)

- Develop guidelines for allowing personal reusable water bottles, tumblers/mugs, and cutlery for those that wish to do so
- If cups are provided, choose BPI-certified compostable fiber-based paper, not plastic
- When drinks are dispensed from a water station, soda fountain, coffee machine or similar equipment, receptacles should not come into contact with dispensers

SINGLE-USE WATER

- Provide water in aluminum cans over single-use plastic; twist (screw) top options are available
- Canned water is preferred as aluminum is infinitely recyclable and accepted in all recycling markets
- Boxed water is to be avoided as the container is not recyclable or compostable and will go to landfill
- Where possible, choose brands manufactured local to shooting location

SINGLE-USE FOOD SERVICE PRODUCTS

- Source recycled content or choose BPI-certified compostable fiber-based paper products instead of single-use plastics where possible
- Fiber-based paper cups, lids, to-go containers and wood cutlery is preferred over PLA
- Absolutely no foam (polystyrene #6) cups or service ware to be provided
- Look for FSC or SFI certification which ensures fiber came from sustainably managed forests or sources

SOURCING FOOD

- Purchase local, organic food as much as possible
- Minimize red meat (beef and lamb) and increase plant-based options
 - Beef production is the [largest driver](#) of tropical deforestation¹

FOOD DONATIONS

- Continue donating food if stored at appropriate temperature and maintained with food safety protocols

¹ "What's Driving Deforestation?" *Union of Concerned Scientists*, Feb. 8, 2016, www.ucsusa.org/resources/whats-driving-deforestation.

PRIORITIZE RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES AND PURCHASING (CONT.)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTHY & SAFETY / SANITATION

Health and safety are top priorities. Understanding that the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential, below are considerations for discussion.

HYGIENE AND SANITATION

- For handwashing stations choose soaps with environmental certifications (i.e., [EPA Safer Choice](#)²)
- Use refillable hand sanitizer stations or refillable bottles
- Source paper products (hand towels, tissues and toilet paper) containing 100% recycled content
- Install foot pedal door openers to reduce paper towel usage

MASKS AND FACE COVERINGS

- Use KN95 or KF94 masks and opt for face shields
- Opt for reusable cloth masks, face coverings, and face shields, if approved to do so
- Enlist laundry service or UV machines for sanitization per Safety guidelines

GLOVES

- Universal glove use is not recommended as it may lead to a false sense of security
- When required, compostable options are available, as are glove recycling programs

CLEANING

- Select EPA-registered cleaners and detergents with [lower environmental impacts](#)³
- Train as needed in the [proper use of “green” cleaners](#)⁴

ADDITIONAL MEASURES

- Enlist sourcing to locate and negotiate pricing for environmentally preferred products
- Single-use PPE may be disposed of as regular (non-biohazard) waste and may be recycled through a [specialized recycling program](#)⁵ instead of going to landfill, when possible
- Distribute kits that include reusable utensils, tape to label, reusable PPE, COVID key, etc.
- Make the daily health questionnaire digital/mobile friendly
- If giving daily wrist bands, look for paper or compostable options

OTHER PURCHASING

CONSTRUCTION / SET BUILDING

- Reuse set materials as much as possible to reduce the amount of new building materials purchased
- When purchasing, choose FSC Lauan or other responsible alternatives to protect tropical forests and biodiversity

REUSABLE BAGS

- Cloth reusable bags can be used for shopping, wardrobe, bagging equipment if washed regularly

² “Safer Choice.” US EPA, May 8, 2020, www.epa.gov/saferchoice.

³ Hwang, Nina, MPH. “Green Seal – How to Safely Disinfect for Coronavirus.” *Green Seal*, May 6, 2020, www.greenseal.org/blog/how-to-safely-disinfect-for-coronavirus.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “Safety Equipment and Protection Gear Zero Waste Box.” *Terracycle*, March 4, 2022 <https://shop.terracycle.com/products/safety-equipment-and-protective-gear-zero-waste-boxes? ga=2.186275753.1657955376.1646425166-1447291314.1646425166>

REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS AND IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

A [Harvard study](#) found that a small increase in particulate matter, often associated with diesel exhaust, led to a large increase in COVID-19 death rates.⁶ The same practices that allow for lighter and more nimble crews also improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and aid in the fight against climate change.

TRANSPORTATION AND EQUIPMENT (KEEPING AIR CLEAN ON SET)

NO IDLING POLICY

- In an effort to limit exhaust, enforce a strict no idling policy for all equipment and vehicles

RENEWABLE DIESEL

- Use [Renewable Diesel](#), when available, which [improves air quality](#)⁷

FUEL EFFICIENT / CLEAN VEHICLES

- Prioritize hybrid/electric options when considering single-occupancy, private transportation or shuttles
- Reevaluate (“right size”) the footprint of trucks and trailers, appropriate to shooting needs
- Support grid connected charging infrastructure to avoid charging with diesel generators
- Alternative means of transport such as cycling should be encouraged

USE BATTERY POWER SOURCES / LIMIT DIESEL GENERATORS

- Connect monitors, cameras, or non-lighting equipment to auxiliary batteries allowing for less down time between set ups and faster turnarounds
- Limit generators by tying into the grid and/or use battery power sources (aka battery generator)

LED SET LIGHTING

- Maximize use of LED set lighting, which is lighter to lift, can be remotely controlled and powered by batteries

LOCATION LOGISTICS

SCOUTS

- Use photo libraries and virtual-tour scouting
- Have a dedicated scout provide a live-virtual tour, done remotely via video conference or filmed and shared
- Minimize people on pre-production scouts, reducing transportation needed

PRODUCTION SUPPORT

- Consider technology such as Q-take or Tera-Vuer to replace video village
- Modify EPK/BTS by installing fixed cameras and conducting remote interviews
- Consider CGI and visual effects options as well as innovative virtual location technologies, e.g., volumetric capture

⁶ Wu, Xiao, et al. “COVID-19 PM2.5.” *Harvard University*, Apr. 24, 2020, <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/covid-pm>.

⁷ Neste. “Reduced Emissions.” *Neste*, Jun. 9, 2020, www.neste.com/companies/products/renewable-road-transport/reduced-emissions.
<https://www.neste.com/companies/products/renewable-road-transport/reduced-emissions>

NORMALIZE DIGITAL WORKFLOW

The goal should be to implement and maintain digital communications and limit hard copy distribution—improving efficiency, security of information, and sustainability on set.

PRODUCTION, POST PRODUCTION AND ACCOUNTING

- Eliminate hard copy distribution of production documents (call sheets, schedules, scripts, sides)
- Mandate digital start packets, timecards, contracts, PO's and other accounting procedures
- Consider ACH and/or direct deposit for both payroll and vendor payments
- If printing is required, copy double-sided and use 100% recycled content paper
- Prioritize reusing office supplies. If purchasing new, choose those with environmental attributes

STRENGTHEN RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

As single-use items are expected to increase upon return to work, it is important to implement [industry standard waste and recycling protocols](#) and it is crucial to separate properly on the front end. Keeping food and wood waste out of landfill will reduce methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas and contributor to climate change.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

EDUCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Work with COVID-19 Compliance Officer to implement enhanced health and safety protocols for the handling of trash, recycling, compost and proper PPE disposal

DONATIONS AND REUSE

- Continue asset and set material reuse programs, with proper safety procedures in place

COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE

It is imperative to communicate all protocols clearly and regularly to all stakeholders including cast and crew, studio executives, vendors, communities in which we film and our viewers.

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

- Utilize the sustainability toolkit on GreenProductionGuide.com⁸ that includes PEACH sustainability best practices, the PEAR carbon tracking tool, GPG communication tools and vendor database including COVID-specific recommendations (link to vendor guide)

COMMUNITY

- In this time of increased need, support your local community by organizing food, material or financial drives

COMMUNICATION

- Use the digital call sheet to communicate safety and environmental messages
- Include sustainability guidelines in trainings and top-of-the-morning announcements
- Post and email COVID-specific sustainable production recommendations, signage and updates to cast and crew throughout prep and shoot

⁸ Producers Guild of America Foundation. "Green Production Guide." *Green Production Guide*, May 8, 2020, www.greenproductionguide.com.

COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE (CONT.)

WRITERS

- Write climate stories, incorporate environmental storylines, and see the Environmental Media Association’s (EMA) “Greening Plotlines and Characters” [here](#) (bottom of page)⁹
- When possible, write to fewer sets and locations, reducing number of builds, locations, and set dressing needed

SET DECORATION AND PROPS

- Model sustainable behaviors and messaging on-screen, including clean vehicles, plant-based meals, reusable bottles and bags, etc.
- If single-use on-screen is unavoidable, use canned water (vs. plastic bottles) and paper bags (vs. plastic)

TALENT AND ABOVE-THE-LINE

- For more ways that ATL can support, review and implement practices from the [EMA Green Rider](#) (mid-page)¹⁰

⁹ “EMA Green Seal | Greening Plotlines and Characters.” *Environmental Media Association*, May 8, 2020, www.green4ema.org/ema-green-seal-production.

¹⁰ “EMA Green Seal | Resources | EMA Green Rider.” *Environmental Media Association*, May 8, 2020, www.green4ema.org/ema-green-seal-production.