

Stakeholder Influences on Sustainability Practices in Public Assembly Facilities

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The phrase “going green” is now a commonplace term, heard across several media forums directed at American consumers on a consistent basis. Whether it is for the newest hybrid car or kitchen cleanser, the call for sustainable products has permeated societal culture. For almost forty years, the conservation of natural resources, proper disposal of waste, and reduction of carbon emissions have become worldwide concerns (Ambec & Lanoie, 2008). These (and many other) environmental issues have come to the forefront as the primary global challenge in the 21st century (Sachs, 2007). Businesses often make it a requirement for Requests for Proposals (RFPs) when looking to build or partner with other. “The green movement has emerged as a critical business model and facilities that want to be competitive and in the forefront of their industry are taking steps to join the movement” (Wettlaufer, 2009, p.10). An initial step many facilities are taking to join the green movement includes making efforts to make their building more sustainable and have less of an environmental impact. Sustainable practices within industrial buildings are an influential, rapidly growing and evolving field. It is not surprising that this trend has found its way into the business and sport and entertainment industry.

While research on Environmental Social Responsibility (ESR) is gaining momentum (e.g., Husted & de Jesus Salazar, 2006; Siegel & Vitaliano, 2007), environmental research specific to sport and tourism management is still in its infancy. Much of the work in these fields have focused on the environmental drain of golf courses (Schmidt, 2006) and environmental issues associated with sport mega-events (e.g., Berkaak, 1999; Getz, 2005; Leopkey & Parent, 2009; Stubbs, 2001). In addition, conceptual calls for research on the environmental impacts of sport have been forwarded (e.g., Hums, 2010; Thibault, 2009), however, little attention has been paid to how facilities and arenas are addressing environmental issues. This is somewhat surprising since these buildings are where the largest and most visible environmental challenges loom for sport and tourism practitioners. For example, recycling (e.g., cans, cups, food wrappers, discarded game programs, etc.), waste water control (e.g., irrigation, sewage, etc.), kilowatt monitoring (e.g., lighting, heating, ventilation, etc.), all influence the environmental impact of the venue. Thus, the challenges faced by modern facility managers underscore the need for empirical robustness to guide environmental practice and theoretical development in this area. As such, this poster presentation will begin to delve into the reality of the facility response to external and industry pressure for sustainable actions.