

# The Official P.O.W.E.R. Challenge RA Pack



A UT tradition since 2005, the Make Orange Green POWER Challenge is a way for the UT community to demonstrate its commitment to reducing the university's environmental impact. The POWER (Programs of Water, Energy, and Recycling) Challenge is a month-long competition that puts UT residence halls against each other in a battle to see which hall is the greenest.

A variety of different actions will award Res Halls points. Throughout the month prizes will be awarded to RAs and residents with cool programs, awesome bulletin boards, and dedication to making their floor go green. At the end of October, the residence hall with the most points wins the POWER Challenge and a prize for all residents to use throughout the year.

For more information or any questions from this packet contact Leah Fontaine, the Sustainability Outreach Coordinator. Email: [Lfontain@utk.edu](mailto:Lfontain@utk.edu), office phone: (865) 974-7386

# Points Breakdown

Residents Halls can earn points for these activities...

- **Residence Hall Programs:** 60 points, plus 5 points for additional 5 people in attendance after the first 15 people
  - **Description:** Floor programs must be interactive and educational in order to receive points. All events must be zero waste.
  - **Ideas:** planting event, documentary screening, clothing swap, schedule a Sustainability Talk or Recycling Talk
  - **Reporting:** email [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu), include the sign in sheet, pictures from the event, and a brief event description
  
- **Floor Programs:** 30 Points Per Program plus 5 points for additional 3 people in attendance after the first 10 people
  - **Description:** Floor programs must be interactive and educational in order to receive points. All events must be zero waste.
  - **Ideas:** planting event, documentary screening, clothing swap, schedule a Sustainability Talk or Recycling Talk
  - **Reporting:** email [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu), include the sign in sheet, pictures from the event, and a brief event description
  
- **Attend a sponsored event:** 5 points per attendee, plus 30 points for residence hall with highest percentage in attendance
  - **Description:** We are still in the process of deciding our sponsored events for the month, but they will be posted on our social media and most likely emailed out. We do have one set in stone:
    - Sustainability Day Symposium: October 22<sup>nd</sup> 11 am-3 pm and 6-8 pm
  - **Reporting:** we will have sign up sheets at our table where they can both get their passport for free food, and sign in for the residence hall.
  
- **Door Decorations:** 30 Points per RA who posts a *POWER Challenge door decoration*
  - An RA can earn 30 points for making their monthly door decoration environmentally or sustainability themed.
    - An individual RA can only gain these points once so don't try to make a new door decoration every week to gain more points- we don't want extra paper waste! Be creative and have fun with these. We'd especially love to see some made out of upcycled materials. Email me at [lfontain@utk.edu](mailto:lfontain@utk.edu) if you'd like to raid any of our cardboard/recycling dumpsters for materials you could use!
  - Take a picture of at least one of the door decorations and send it to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu).

- **Bulletin Boards: 15 Points Each**
  - Bulletin boards are each worth 15 points.
    - Additional points may be awarded if you change your bulletin boards throughout the month, but no more than one per week (max of 60 points).
    - They must be educational and detailed, and if possible made with recycled material. (Email [fontain@utk.edu](mailto:fontain@utk.edu) if you'd like to raid any of our cardboard/recycling dumpster.)
  - Ideas: UT Public Drop Off Information, tips on how to reduce energy in everyday life, information on ways to get involved, calendar of the different POWER Challenge events throughout the month, etc.
  - Reporting: Send a picture of each bulletin to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu)
  
- **Educational Flyers: 10 Points Per Flyer Design**
  - Educational flyers are worth 10 points per flyer design. These are not meant to promote the POWER Challenge, but to provide educational information for residents.
    - Points are not awarded for each flyer that is hung, but rather for each different educational flyer. Please do not hang excess fliers as using more paper is less sustainable!
  - Examples: flyers in the bathroom about reducing shower times, turning off water while shaving or brushing your teeth, instructional/informational flyers about waste and recycling in the trash room, or tips for laundry like air drying and using cold water
  - Reporting: Send a picture of each flyer to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu)
  
- **Service Projects: 2 points per half hour for each person, ex: 1 hour of service is 4 points**
  - Community service is an important part of sustainability which is why we include volunteering as a part of the POWER Challenge. Any community service project completed during the challenge may be recorded by RAs, Hall Directors, and residents
  - Idea: Visit the Volunteer Page on our website (<https://sustainability.utk.edu/take-action/volunteer-opportunities/>) or the Center for Leadership and Service's event calendar (<https://leadserve.utk.edu/sign-up-to-serve/>)
  - Reporting: Send a picture of you at the event, as well as the volunteer sign in sheet you signed in to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu)
  
- **Social Media: 1 point per student per new follower**
  - Make Orange Green accounts
    - Twitter: @SustainableUT
    - Facebook: @SustainableUTK
    - Instagram: @SustainableUT
  - Please encourage residents to not unfollow right after they show you they follow us, as we post exciting things from environmental events happening on campus and around Knoxville, environmental initiatives in the news, and more!

- Reporting: Student shows RA they are following MOG account. RA logs on the social media following sheet and emails an updated version each week to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu)
- **Pace Bike Share: 5 points per ride**
  - Every student who uses a Pace Bike throughout the month will receive 5 points for their residence hall.
  - Ideas: The Greenway is a great place to bike. Additionally, "I Bike Knx" has a lot of great biking resources relevant to Knoxville
  - Reporting: take a picture of yourself on the bike and use the hashtag "#PacePOWER". Additionally email the photo to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu).
- **Water, Energy, and Recycling Monitoring: Residence Halls will be ranked and assigned points accordingly**
  - Water usage, electricity usage and recycling will be rated per-resident. For example, the hall with the lowest per-resident water usage receives 100 points and the hall with the highest receives only 10 points. This goes for each of the three categories.
  - To help lower usage in all 3 categories, be sure to really utilize all of the above point opportunities as the overall goal of them is to encourage student's different ways to reduce water and energy usage in lower waste, while increasing recycling
  - Reporting: The Office of Sustainability will calculate this

### **Reporting your points**

All reporting will be done via email to [sustainability@utk.edu](mailto:sustainability@utk.edu)

- Scanned copies or picture of pledge/sign in sheets is acceptable
- In all emails please include your dorm, and if it's an event, include how many people attended.

Scoring updates will be posted to all of our social medias, and sent out in weekly report cards to the Hall Directors and RAs.

## Organized Events

This year we will have several events organized through our office that residents can attend to gain points. Each resident who attends will receive 5 points for their hall, and the hall with participation will receive an extra 30 points.

- **Sustainability Day Symposium, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11AM – 3PM and 6PM – 8PM**
  - Come out to Strong Hall and celebrate campus Sustainability Day! Dozens of environmentally focused groups from both campus and around Knoxville will be in attendance, additionally there will be free food, giveaways and games! Later on in the night, we will also be premiering our first ever Sustainability Day Symposium!
- **Zero Waste Game Day: Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, multiple times**
  - Come out and work with UT Recycling at the Zero Waste Game Day! We strive to make each home football game as zero waste as possible, diverting at least 90% of all waste generated. Come be part of the Waste Warriors! Visit UT Recycling's website to sign up to volunteer.
- **More to come!**

## Tips

## Ways to Reduce Water, Energy, and Waste

- Water
  - Cut shower time (aim for 5 minutes).
  - Don't let water run when brushing your teeth, shaving, or washing the dishes.
  - Only do laundry when you have a full load and use cold water settings to reduce energy usage. (The cold water is also better for most clothing!)
  - Stop drinking bottled water. (The production and distribution of bottled water requires about 2,000 times more energy than tap water!) Always carry your reusable water bottle. There are over 170 refill stations across campus!
  - Use your dishwasher only when it's full, and do use it as opposed to washing every dish individually!
  - Don't use a tray in the dining halls
  - If something is leaking, be sure to encourage your residents to report it ASAP by calling the Facilities One Call: (865) 946-7777
  - Resources: <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/freshwater/water-conservation-tips/>
  
- Energy
  - Remember to power down! Turn off and unplug electronics when not in use.
  - Turn off the lights when you leave a room and take advantage of natural daylight during peak energy hours of 2-8pm.
  - Switch to energy efficient light bulbs
  - Take the stairs instead of the elevator
  - Minimize use of hot water, especially when doing laundry (cold water generally preserves colors of clothes better anyway)
  - Try not to use a dryer, encourage students to invest in a drying rack
  - Walk, bike or take the bus! Avoid driving
  - Report drafty windows, broken doors, and other energy wasting sources ASAP by calling the Facilities One Call: (865) 946-7777
  - Resources: <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/>;  
<http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/green-living/>;  
<http://facilities.utsa.edu/energytips.htm>;  
<http://www.usnews.com/education/articles/2010/01/28/5-unique-ways-to-go-green-if-youre-living-in-a-dorm>
  
- Waste
  - Remember: first, reduce. Second, reuse. Third, recycle.
    - 1) Reduce: Try to reduce consumption in all areas of your life, whether it be buying a new product or taking too much food and being forced to throw the rest away. Reducing the amount you consume is the first step to limiting your waste.

- 2) Reuse: If you must buy something, buy something that will last, and that you can reuse.
  - Here at UT, the Mug Project allows you to pay only \$1.29 for any drip coffee or fountain drink if you bring your own container. Not only does it keep something from the landfill, it saves you money!
  - There are many other ways to have reusable items in your everyday life, read more about them here:
   
<https://environment.utk.edu/2018/06/28/affordable-reusable-items/>
- 3) Recycle: When you must use something and you absolutely cannot reuse it, then it's time to recycle. There are waste rooms on every floor in every res hall for all recyclables besides cardboard which is located outside. If you have questions about what recycling bin to place something in, check out the UTK Recycling Website
- If you use a Keurig, use the reusable k-cup rather than the disposable ones (this will also save lots of money!)
- Resources: <http://www.nrdc.org/cities/recycling/gsteps.asp>;
   
<http://www.recycling-revolution.com/recycling-facts.html>

## Previous Years

Last year's winner was Massey Hall. Throughout the month, residence in all of the halls helped to recycling 216 tons of material, used 368,237 fewer gallons of water, and avoided \$72,000 in energy costs.

### Program Ideas from Previous Programs

- Zero Waste Events
  - Cereal or pasta social where students bring their own bowls and utensils. Cereal/Pasta box can be recycled and there's no waste from disposable plates. To be even more sustainable, do a vegetarian sauce rather than using meat.
  - BYOM (Bring your own mug) coffee night with organic coffee. This could be a late night study event if there are midterms in October
  - Clean plate night. Host a dinner which residents must bring their own plates, utensils, and cups to and make sure residents know that what they put on the plate, they must eat! No trash cans. This encourages people to really assess what they'll actually eat.
  - Pumpkin carving. Make jack-o-lanterns and make pies and roasted seeds with the leftover pumpkin guts.
- Upcycling Events
  - Reuse old containers like milk jugs or glass containers to plant flowers. UT no longer can accept glass, so we would love to see innovation with reusing glass!

- Recycled art projects. There are lots of great ideas on Pinterest, especially under the “upcycle” tag. Get creative, maybe have them try to design their residents hall from all materials found in the trash
- Recycled Halloween costume competition from things like cardboard boxes and can tabs
- T shirt upcycling. Teach residents how to make no-sew grocery bags or pillows out of old t shirts. Show them how to make a t-shirt blanket
- Tye-dye event. Invite students to tye-dye old worn out t-shirts, sheets, pillowcases, etc. to give them new life.
- Create collages from old flyers and magazines.
- DIY Event
  - DIY Laundry Event to teach residents how to make their own laundry detergent, dryer sheets, etc. Have them bring their own bottle for the detergent. Make sure to include green laundry tips like washing with a full load on cold water settings.
- Educational Events
  - POWER Challenge Jeopardy or Trivia Night with eco-friendly prizes. Use questions related to recycling, water usage, energy and other sustainability topics like climate change, alternative transportation, food systems, etc.
  - Documentary or short video series showing. Make sure you encourage residents to power down their electronics and lights while they are out of their rooms.
  - Recycling and Composting Tailgate. Host a tailgate party and educate residents on recycling during commercials and when they go to dispose of waste. Make sure to contact us about composting food waste!
  - Recycling games/recycling education. Teach students about what can and cannot be recycled on campus. This pairs well with recycling games like basket tosses, modified corn hole, and creating hula hoops from recycled materials. Contact us for more information/ideas for recycling games.
  - Post Green Did-You-Know posters in the lobby or on resident hall floors.
  - Plan a day where everyone in the residence hall is encouraged to wear green. Encourage students to take pictures of their green outfits or gather for a group picture.
- On and Off Campus Trips
  - Go to the Market Square Farmers Market
    - Use the purchases from these trips to do a community or pot-luck meal made from local ingredients. Students can once again bring their own plates and utensils.
  - Go on a UTOP trip or an Ijams hike.
  - Outdoor activities- encourage residents to turn off their lights and electronics for an hour and join you in an outdoor activity like volleyball
  - Ride bikes on the greenways around campus.