

YMCA of the Rockies

YMCA Vision 2030 Case Study

A grassroots effort from young leaders helped YMCA of the Rockies significantly reduce plastic waste and save money.

AT A GLANCE

YMCA: YMCA of the Rockies
Camp and conference centre
ymcarockies.org

YMCA Alliance: YMCA-USA



Vision 2030 Pillar:
Sustainable Planet

Dates of the project:
September 2020



Snow comes almost a month later and melts a month earlier than it did 30 years ago. We're in such a beautiful location, and it's sad it may not be the same in future generations".

Julie Watkins

CEO, YMCA of the Rockies



THE CHALLENGE

The plastic wrap initiative began as a grassroots effort among the staff members. They identified that the YMCA wasted a lot of plastic and money each year by wrapping the towels in single-use plastic to take them to the lodging units.

"Once we got to the units, the towels were unwrapped, and we just threw away the plastic", said YMCA Rockies Vice President of Association Advancement Carrie Rossman. "The staff identified that there was a better way".

THE RESPONSE

The Youth-led Solutions team utilised grant funding from Y-USA to finance the project.

The YSL initiative was launched by the World YMCA to put resources – knowledge, network, and funding – into the hands of young people and to support their contribution to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This round of solutions supported projects focused on climate action. YMCA of the Rockies submitted for the grant through a youth-led team of employees and was one of 35 climate action projects across 20 countries to be recognized by the World YMCA at the Youth-Led Solutions Summit: Climate Action in the fall of 2020.



After

The towel and linen bundles (above) in their new bags and transport. Before (right), all the plastic was thrown away.



Before



"It doesn't take much to make a difference. All we did is change the plastic wrap in our department. And we've seen huge benefits from that as well as a reduction in the waste we produce".

– Emily Pullen
Director of Housekeeping



Learn more about the YMCA of the Rockies and Sustainable Planet.

(Continued)

Funds were used to purchase reusable plastic bags. And that enabled the team to stop using single-use plastic and to make a lot of progress in reducing waste and saving money.

Along with covering the cost of reusable storage options for towels and linen, the grant also allowed for the purchase of equipment to help housekeeping staff transport the larger, heavier reusable bundles of linens to the cabins and lodge rooms.

PROJECT OUTCOME

Before: Across the association from 2017 to 2019, the YMCA of the Rockies consumed over 659 rolls of plastic wrap costing around USD \$77,048, an average of over 219 rolls at over USD \$25,682 per year.

- 219 rolls per year equal 191 miles or 307.3 kilometres of plastic wrap!

After: Upon replacing the plastic wrap used for linens with reusable bags, YMCA of the Rockies eliminated over a million feet (about 305,000 metres) of plastic wrap waste and saved tens of thousands of dollars each year.

NOTABLE DETAILS

Its board approved YMCA Rockies' strategic plan in April 2022, and it closely aligns with YMCA Vision 2030.

"One of the five pillars is environmental sustainability", said Carrie. "We seek to be a leader among camps and conference centres in this area. We know we have a lot of work and a lot of opportunity to live into that".

LESSONS LEARNED

For other YMCAs looking to implement Vision 2030, Carrie suggested keeping the following in mind:

- Embrace the focus on environmental sustainability. "Know that the work we do in that space is benefitting the adults and youth we serve and the future of our planet".
- You have to meet people where they're at and walk with them along that journey, she said. For some YMCAs, that may be a slower walk.

See how YMCA Rockies is making a difference!



SUSTAINABILITY

AT THE YMCA OF THE ROCKIES



THAT'S A WRAP ON PLASTIC WRAP ELIMINATE PLASTIC WRAP

1
PLASTIC
ROLL =

EMPIRE
STATE
BUILDING
3.1 X



Across the association from 2017 to 2019, YMCA of the Rockies consumed over

659

rolls of plastic wrap for linens – costing roughly \$77,048. This averaged over 219 rolls at over \$25,682/year.

Plastic wrap rolls are 36 inches by 4600 feet – the Empire State Building is 1,454 feet to the tip. One roll would go up and down the length of the Empire State Building 3.1 times!

REUSABLE VINYL BUNDLE SYSTEM

By replacing the plastic wrap rolls with reusable vinyl bags, we have eliminated over a **MILLION FEET** of plastic wrap waste and saved tens of thousands of dollars per year.

SNOW MOUNTAIN RANCH SOLAR FARM



250kW
Solar array

800

Solar panels that track the sun and create energy from both sides.

100%
of the energy
needed on low-use
days will come
from Solar Power.



Re-seeding will be
done using a
native grass mix.

ESTES PARK CENTER ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS



Estes Park Center is planning to unveil a new ChargePoint CT4025 charger.

2

Electric vehicles
can be charged
at one time.



Plans to give
all donors the
option to
install EV
chargers at
Donor Cabins.

ADDITIONAL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

ESTES PARK CENTER



Energy Star
Appliances



Leave No
Trace
Partners

YMCA of the Rockies designated
127 acres of land in a conservation
easement in 2019

SNOW MOUNTAIN RANCH



Electric vehicle
charging stations
on property



Leave No
Trace
Partners

Established a
Conservation Preserve
in 2010 protecting

2,800

acres of YMCA property
from future development

