

Warren Hall's Green Final Farewell

The historic but seismically unsafe Warren Hall is going down—but at least it's going down green. Like a brick-and-mortar organ donor, the building's many parts will be repurposed via reuse and recycling before and after demolition begins.



The takedown of the School of Public Health's old home will be the keystone of a pilot project started by the campus sustainability and reuse communities, designed to increase the reuse of abandoned materials prior to the demolition of buildings.

"When departments leave a building that is scheduled to be demolished, they leave waste that contractors would otherwise take to the dump," says Judy Chess, project manager with UC Berkeley Capital Projects. "The goal of this new project is to use those materials instead and minimize landfills."

The project is a recent collaboration between the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Sustainability,

which promotes environmental management and sustainable development at UC Berkeley, and Re-USE (the campus materials exchange program), a project of Campus Recycling and Refuse Services that distributes unwanted but reusable materials back to the campus community. Two student interns funded by a grant from the Chancellor's Intern Fund will be responsible for a waste triage to determine which items—including furniture and lab and office supplies—can be reused or recycled.

"We collaborated with local organizations and recycling centers such as Urban Ore, Cal Overstock and Surplus Den to find homes for as many of the

materials as possible," says Renee Chaffin of Campus Re-USE. "Many of the items have since been moved and will be reused as the demolition project advances.

Campus Re-USE will also be involved in the takedown of Department of Health Services on Berkeley Way—the proposed site of the new home for the School of Public Health. "As the Warren Hall project proceeds, we will be conducting a process analysis to set up best practices for future demolition projects on campus," says Chess.



Demolition of Warren Hall itself began in January 2008, and the process continues to be as eco-friendly as possible. The contractors are required by the campus to recycle at least 50 percent of the building materials, including concrete and steel. Although hazardous materials issues cause a degree of uncertainty as to what can safely be recycled from the hall, the campus still expects the amount to exceed 50 percent. Christine Shaff, communications manager with UC Berkeley Facilities Services, believes 70 percent of the building materials will end up being recycled.

The landscaping surrounding Warren Hall is also being preserved or recycled. "We are not taking down too many trees," says Shaff, "even though it makes space for the demolition and construction very tight." The trees along Oxford and on the West Circle will stay. Those few trees that will be removed will possibly be milled into lumber for use in future UC Berkeley building projects. An inventory of the building site will include moving or recycling various outside items including bike racks and lampposts.

Demolition will also proceed in a health-conscious fashion. Asbestos and other contaminants will

be cleaned out prior to the demolition. In nearby buildings such as Mulford Hall and the Genetics and Plant Biology Building, air flow will be re-routed and construction filters will be added to the intake system. Contractors are also required to control and minimize dust as they work.

Although Warren Hall itself will become a memory, parts of it will live on—a fitting tribute to a building that housed the School of Public Health for more than 50 years. 🍷

—Linda Anderberg