



Office of Sustainability  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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19 December 2014

Professor Benjamin J. McCall  
Associate Director for Campus Sustainability  
Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Re:** Application for a styrofoam densifier.

Professor McCall:

I am writing to express my strong support for your proposal to the UIUC Student Sustainability Committee entitled "Styrofoam Recycling."

As you know, the University of Wisconsin - Madison has benefited from a student-led initiative to collect styrofoam from across campus and convey it to a local recycler. This effort now diverts more than a semi-truckload of styrofoam from the landfill every month, and is essentially self-supporting at this point.

Our students have not been content to simply set up a fantastic styrofoam recycling scheme on our campus: they have applied for (and received) a grant from the US EPA to expand styrofoam recycling at two other major university campuses. As we discussed earlier this year, they selected UIUC as one of those two campuses because of its intensive research mission (which means a steady stream of styrofoam waste in the form of coolers for biological samples) and because of the challenge associated with no local styrofoam recycler.

Through this US EPA grant, we will be able to provide UIUC with two years of financial support for the initiation and operation of a styrofoam recycling program. This will include funds for the necessary collection containers, signage, marketing materials; and most importantly funding for student interns to organize the program. Our students are also ready and willing to provide logistical advice and troubleshooting, and I understand that you have already had several phone calls with them.

Our US EPA grant is not large enough to fund the purchase of a styrofoam densifier or for the infrastructure necessary to support it. We were delighted to learn that you have found a local recycling company willing to site a densifier and handle the collection and materials feeding processes. The only missing piece in setting up UIUC's Styrofoam recycling program is acquiring the densifier. We enthusiastically support your proposal to the Student Sustainability Committee to acquire and install a densifier to enable styrofoam recycling for your campus.

Sincerely,

Craig H. Benson, PhD, PE, NAE  
Director of Sustainability Research and Education  
Wisconsin Distinguished Professor