

## 'The X-Files' Returns for Season 11 and Continues to Break New Ground in Sustainable TV Production



For more than a decade, *The X-Files* has occupied a space at the forefront of environmentally sustainable film and television production. Beginning with efforts on the feature film *The X-Files: I Want to Believe* in 2007 and continuing through its initial [return to TV in 2016](#), the franchise has consistently demonstrated a commitment to conserving energy, reducing waste, and always searching for innovative strategies and technologies that forge new paths toward sustainability. The show's [eleventh season](#), which began airing on FOX in January 2018, is no exception.

Many of the crew members who helped the 2016 *X-Files* event series go green returned for Season 11, including Sustainable Production Coordinator Zena Harris [who also brought on Jennifer Sandoval](#), both of [Green Spark Group](#). Over the course of a four-month production schedule spanning more than 40 locations in British Columbia, Canada, the new season achieved a 68% waste diversion rate, avoided 19 tonnes of carbon emissions, and saved nearly \$150,000 in the process. The production also introduced a new food donation program that distributed more than 2,500 meals to those in need in the Vancouver area, and has already encouraged other film and TV projects in the region to adopt similar programs. These accomplishments exemplify the dedication of Twentieth Century Fox Television and all 21st Century Fox businesses to reduce environmental impacts, grow sustainably, and inspire others to take action.

See below for an in-depth look at the sustainability measures implemented on the set of *The X-Files*.

### Engaging the Crew

The crew began developing their sustainability strategy from the first day of pre-production in August 2017. Producer Grace Gilroy distributed an all-hands memo emphasizing the importance of sustainability to the success of the production, and Harris met individually with each department to devise plans to reduce waste, conserve fuel, source materials responsibly, and positively engage the Vancouver community. The team drew from the [Green Production Guide](#), created by Twentieth Century Fox

and other major Hollywood studios in collaboration with the Producers Guild of America. The return of so many crewmembers from the previous season helped *The X-Files* Season 11 implement 64% of the GPG's best practices on set.

As filming began, each department monitored their progress and closely tracked their consumption of energy and materials. Harris and Sandoval also worked with crew during lunch to inform the crew of proper composting and recycling procedure. In addition, "Green Champions" were identified for their sustainability efforts and recognized at the production office. The team also hung flyers with "green tips" around the stages at North Shore Studios and included a new "green tip" on the call sheets every week.



### **Sourcing Materials**

Sustainable sourcing has long been a key concern for film and television productions, as products such as paper for the production office and lumber for set construction comprise a significant portion of a project's environmental footprint. On *The X-Files*, the crew took the following measures to ensure materials were procured responsibly:

- 100% of the paper used in the Production Office was certified by the [Sustainable Forestry Initiative](#) (SFI), a nonprofit that works with local communities and conservation groups to prevent deforestation.
- The crew exclusively purchased lauan plywood that was certified by the [Forest Stewardship Council](#) (FSC), which guarantees that the plywood was sourced from responsibly managed forests throughout Southeast Asia.



## Reducing Waste

Proper waste management is a production-wide effort. Some guidelines, such as replacing plastic water bottles with refillable ones or recycling used materials properly, apply to everyone, but each department also faces sustainability challenges specific to their field and must devise unique plans to overcome them. Some of those plans include the following:

- Production-wide reduction of plastic water bottles and the Production Office instead supplied every crew and cast member with a refillable bottle. This practice avoided the use of more than 126,400 plastic bottles.
- Locations Department made compost and recycling receptacles as available and abundant as possible, both at North Shore Studios and on location.
- The Catering Department exclusively provided compostable plates and Production Office used reusable dishware.
- The Set Construction and Wardrobe Departments reused materials from other Vancouver-area shows that had wrapped production, and rented props and costumes rather than buy them permanently.
- The Makeup Department recycled product packaging wherever possible.
- Vendors also help in the process: [Keep It Green Recycling](#) collected paper, batteries, CD/DVDs plastic, glass, foam, bottles, ink cartridges, paint cans, light bulbs, and textile waste. Further, [Waste Management](#), [Mini Bins](#), and [North Star](#), collected trash, organic materials, and construction materials for proper sorting, processing, and recycling.

## Conserving Energy

As on previous 21CF projects that have filmed in Vancouver, *The X-Files* Season 11 took full advantage of British Columbia's commitment to clean energy. Nearly 95% of the province's electricity comes from renewable sources, primarily hydroelectric dams but also natural gas, wind power, and biomass power plants. The crew used grid power when filming at North Shore Studios and on location whenever possible.

The Transportation Department instituted a no-idling policy for all on-set vehicles, and the production office was encouraged to power off equipment when not in use. In addition, 20% of all set lighting used throughout the production was energy efficient, including LED.



### **Supporting the Community**

In a first for the Vancouver film industry, *The X-Files* and North Shore Studios, in collaboration with [Sustainable Lockup collaborator, Keep It Green Recycling](#), instituted the first official Food Donation Program for a film or TV project, contributing leftover meals to Vancouver families in need.

Catering traditionally constitutes a significant portion of a production's environmental footprint, with leftover food and utensils often going to the landfill. Fortunately, British Columbia's laws protect food donors from liability, and *The X-Files* crew jumped at the chance to make a positive impact on their community.

Every day, the crew wrapped up leftover food and left it in a designated refrigerator on the studio lot. Representatives from nonprofits such as [SAGE Transition House](#) and the [Lookout Society](#) would visit the studio and pick up the food directly from the refrigerator. All food was stored at safe temperatures and distributed within 24 hours.



“I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for having been lucky enough to participate in this food donation pilot project,” said Frances Robinson, SAGE Program Coordinator, in a letter to the production. “SAGE is a shelter for women and children who are fleeing violence in their lives... The dishes are not something we could have afforded in our own food budget, and I have seen the direct benefit it has had to our women. We feel very fortunate to participate.”

The Food Donation Program provided more than 2,500 meals to these organizations and has already inspired other Vancouver-area productions to institute similar initiatives. *The X-Files* cast and crew were also proud 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners for the [Greater Vancouver Food Bank](#)’s Reel Thanksgiving Challenge that helped raise \$12,670 for the local food bank.