

CARBON NEUTRALITY AT CALVIN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Calvin University committed to become carbon neutral by 2057 when former President Michael Le Roy signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2017. In 2026, Calvin withdrew from the ACUPCC to reduce costs. The Environmental and Energy Sustainability Committee (EESC) commissioned research, implemented by Facilities, to create a realistic plan for carbon neutrality and propose an earlier carbon neutrality date. This report analyzes Calvin's carbon emissions from 2002-present, projects future emissions, and proposes a feasible path to carbon neutrality sooner than 2057. To become carbon neutral, Calvin University needs to offset the projected future Scope 1 (natural gas) emissions of 7920 tonneCO₂/year. Options evaluated included wind power, air- and ground-source heat pumps, building efficiency, solar power, and carbon offsets. Given analysis of feasible options toward carbon neutrality, we recommend procuring high-quality carbon offsets using energy cost savings from a build-out of rooftop solar, funded by a Calvin Solar Revolving Fund (CSRF). Using this strategy, Calvin would become carbon neutral by 2047 under a high offset cost scenario (\$93/tonneCO₂) and 2038 under a low offset cost scenario (\$29/tonneCO₂).

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