



SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS IN VIRGINIA BEACH

As a coastal city, Virginia Beach residents and leadership are conscious of the state of the local environment and the impact actions can have on the long-term health of the planet. The following are some of the key initiatives instituted within Virginia Beach to help keep the city clean and beautiful for years to come:

Woodstock Skate Park

Opened in 2021 as an innovative partnership between the Hampton Roads Sanitation District and the City's Parks & Recreation Department, the unique 30,000 sf facility was designed by Team Pain Skate Parks. It features a warm-up area, ledge runs, a quarter pipe, snake run and two-level bowl with waterfall, all built atop a 5.2-million-gallon wastewater tank surrounded by shaded viewing spots and native plantings.

Mount Trashmore Park

World-renowned Mount Trashmore Park was built by transforming an abandoned 640,000 ton landfill into a City park in 1974. One of the first of its kind in the nation, it includes a pair of lakes, multi-use path, playground and a skate park on the 165-acre site that beckons with sweeping views of the seaside city.

Virginia Beach Convention Center

Virginia Beach is home to the nation's first existing convention center to be certified LEED® Gold (2009). Sustaining initiatives, from recycling to water efficiency and energy and waste reduction, uphold the prestigious certification while protecting and preserving our planet and its natural resources. One of the most recent visible additions to the facility is a set of 15 raised garden beds tended by the catering team to grow organic herbs, fruits and vegetables on-site.

Lynnhaven oyster restoration efforts

Named after the Lynnhaven River, the eponymous oysters are a local delicacy that gained acclaim when enjoyed by Captain John Smith, leader of the first permanent English settlement in America, in 1607. The large, salty bivalves later achieved international culinary status when the colonists shipped them to English aristocracy, but were over-harvested and endangered by decades of pollution. Ongoing restoration efforts include the phased installation of 150+ acres of sanctuary reef to enhance water quality and fishing while adding critical habitat for oysters and other aquatic life. And the celebrated return of the native delicacy to Virginia Beach restaurant menus offers flavorful urgency to continue the restoration campaign.

Brock Environmental Center

Home to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and other local environmental conservation groups, the center is one of the world's most efficient, environmentally smart buildings. Honored with LEED® Platinum status, its solar panels and residential wind turbines actually generate double the amount of energy it uses. The center is the hub for the Foundation's award-winning environmental education programming and outdoor learning experiences including a mobile oyster restoration center.

Chesapeake Beach winter replenishment

With the Bay waters lapping gently at its shore, [Chesapeake Beach](#) offers a more relaxed Virginia Beach environment. But years of wind and waves have eroded the area to a narrow coastal strip. This winter, the City is investing \$6.14 million to replenish the shoreline and expand the beach on the west side of the Lesner Bridge with nearly 400,000 cubic yards of sand dredged from the channel to support cargo ship travel into neighboring Norfolk Harbor.

Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project

In partnership with Dominion Energy, Virginia is leading the nation in offshore wind development. The [Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind \(CVOW\) project](#) is the second project of its kind in the US and the first to be owned by a utility company. Located 27 miles off the shores of Virginia Beach, it currently includes two pilot wind turbines generating 12 megawatts of electricity. When fully completed (188 wind turbines) in 2026, the wind farm will generate up to 8.8 million megawatts per year of clean, renewable energy to the grid and power up to 660,000 Virginia homes. In addition, it avoids as much as 5 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually which is the equivalent of planting more than 80 million trees or removing 1 million non-electric cars from the road for a year. The completed wind farm will create 1,100 jobs and be a catalyst for a new domestic supply chain anchored in Hampton Roads.

[Sunny Farms Hydroponic Greenhouse](#)

One of the largest greenhouse facilities on the East Coast is set to open in Virginia Beach next spring. Initially growing lettuce and other leafy green vegetables, the \$60 million project is highlighted by a 1.2 million sf hydroponic greenhouse set on 32 acres in the city's southern end. Hydroponics is a type of aquaculture that uses nutrients and water to grow plants year-round without soil, and Sunny Farms expects to produce 10 million plants annually by 2025.

Visitors can make a difference during their stay

In addition to all the efforts championed by the city and its residents, visitors also can make a difference in the coastal city. Some of the leading organizations spearheading education and engagement efforts also offer public clean-up events, tours, festivals and more:

- [Lynnhaven River NOW](#) is a grassroots organization launched to restore the health of the Lynnhaven River watershed, a 64-square mile area home to half of the city's population. Working with residents, businesses, schools and communities, the program helps partners learn how to deploy sustainable programs for cleaner waters throughout the city, especially where they flow into the Atlantic Ocean.
- [Virginia Green](#) is a state-sponsored program to encourage green practices in all aspects of the tourism industry. Visitors can support the effort by patronizing certified Virginia Green Travel Partners including hotels, restaurants, tasting rooms and events.
- [Keep It Beachy Clean](#) is an educational litter-prevention program inspiring residents and visitors to help keep trash off our beaches and out of waterways.
- Saving a national treasure is the primary mission of the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#). The organization's Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint for protecting and restoring the Bay, rivers and streams is critical to our region's overall health and underpins a collection of campaigns spanning more than a half century.

About Virginia Beach

Virginia Beach, one of Virginia's most populous cities, resides where the Chesapeake Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean. The city is home to 35 miles of sandy beaches, a flourishing culinary and craft beer scene, rich history, a variety of arts and entertainment and family-friendly

attractions that keep visitors entertained year-round. For more Virginia Beach information, including new attractions and experiences, or to plan your next trip, visit www.visitvirginiabeach.com.

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