



Let's implement *The Sustainability Moment*

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To the Editor,

We commend the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society for introducing environmental sustainability to this year's *Guidelines to the Practice of Anesthesia*.¹ As citizens of the planet, we must be mindful of the current climate crisis. As medical practitioners, to provide thoroughly holistic care, we are obliged to consider the environmental impact of the choices we make in our provision of care. To do so would be in keeping with the World Health Organization's declaration that climate change is the single biggest threat facing humanity.²

Perioperative services contribute significantly to the health care sector's environmental footprint.³ In recent years, our centers have taken many steps to green surgical and anesthesia practice. Some of these initiatives include the abolition of the use of desflurane,⁴ the reclamation and reprocessing of energy devices, and the recycling of polyvinyl chlorides (PVCs).

In our operating rooms, the introduction of new green initiatives is accelerating. Further, as teaching centers, we see significant turnover in our team membership given the rotation of trainees. To provide focus to team members regarding these initiatives, we have recently introduced *The Sustainability Moment*.⁵ Immediately following completion of the first phase of the Surgical Safety Checklist, a brief overview of green initiatives is provided to all team members by the anesthesiologist, generally taking no more than fifteen seconds to complete.

With the recent introduction of *The Sustainability Moment* to our operating rooms, feedback for its use has been very positive. Observations would suggest that more complete separation of waste products (recyclables, biohazard waste, PVCs) occurs following the reminder provided by *The Sustainability Moment*. Further, surgeons have verbalized that they are more mindful of equipment choices, such as selecting reusable over disposable equipment, once they have been primed by *The Sustainability Moment*. And with trainees omnipresent in our operating rooms, it is hoped that they will take their learnings and disseminate them to other facilities and individuals throughout their careers.

At a cost of no more than fifteen seconds per case, we recommend that operating rooms adopt the use of *The Sustainability Moment*.

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