

The Aeron logo features a blue stylized 'A' icon followed by the word 'Aeron' in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**Aeron**

On the Green

**2020**

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Sustainability Report



## Our Continued Mission

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Aleron is committed to the future of our planet. While our environmental impact may be less than other organizations in industries like manufacturing or production, we nevertheless strive to improve our sustainability practices by reducing our waste and emissions. Our organization makes thoughtful and informed decisions that benefit not only our operations, but our environment, as well.

The definition of business success is changing. Today, Aleron is cognizant of the many corporate and social responsibilities that come with being in business. We are more mindful than ever before of the impacts that our company has on the environment and our local community. Much of the business world has embraced this emerging philosophy, along with its new cultures and values—thereby promoting a greener economy.

Aleron's 2020 "On the Green" report details our approach to enhancing our sustainability efforts that embody the modern corporate social responsibility philosophy. To create a sustainable future, we realize the need to operate in a way that promotes ethical, environmental, and economic growth. Our commitment to waste and energy reduction—along with our dedication to being a community- and employee-focused company—is illustrated within this report.

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## Steps Toward Sustainability

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Aleron is constantly searching for new and effective methods to enhance our sustainability efforts. Below are several recent actions we have taken to strengthen our sustainability approach:

- **Aleron Sustainability Taskforce** – We created an all-company taskforce dedicated to enhancing our sustainability efforts. Comprised of a multidisciplinary group of employees, the Taskforce examined our sustainability strategy and took a number of immediate steps to improve it. We began by distributing a survey to all Aleron employees to learn about sustainability practices and needs at all our locations. When asked if they would be interested in contributing to the advancement of Aleron's sustainability approach, the majority of survey respondents indicated that they would be willing to assist.
- **Bottlecap recycling** – Aleron recently provided special recycling bins that employees can utilize to recycle plastic bottle caps. Plastic bottle caps are made from a type of plastic that cannot be recycled with typical plastic bottles, so separating them early in the recycling process allows them to be broken down and reused.
- **A paperless push** – Our organization has taken significant strides to limit our paper usage. At the start of 2020, Aleron implemented DocuSign—an electronic signature solution—to digitally process business and legal documents. We have rolled out initiatives to encourage our direct and temporary employees to sign up for direct deposit or Visa PayCard. These methods enable employees to receive their funds digitally, lessening our reliance on physical paper checks.



- **Online security training** – Aleron’s Privacy and Security Office recently converted its annual, all-employee security training to an online format. These training sessions provided employees with valuable information to prevent malicious cyberattacks, facilitate smooth and safe business operations, and cut down on paper that would otherwise be utilized to distribute training content.
- **Cooling tower replacement** – We recently replaced a 30-year old BAC cooling tower at our operations center with an Evapco AT 14-3F6 cooling tower. Included in the replacement were a VFD (Variable Frequency Drive), a new remote sump, and more user-friendly controls for running the unit. This upgrade will result in higher cooling capacity, less water loss, and increased effectiveness of inline water treatment.
- **Holiday giving initiatives** – During the month of December, Aleron ran a two-week-long food drive at our Buffalo office. Employees were encouraged to place healthy and unperishable food items in a donation barrel. In total, our office collected 132 pounds of food, and all items were donated to FeedMore WNY—a local food pantry. Our Buffalo office also worked with the Little Match Girl Foundation to sponsor a holiday giving campaign for a local charter school. Aleron contributors purchased holiday gifts that were given to children and families in need.
- **Charitable donations** – Continuing to act in the spirit of giving, Aleron decided not to provide holiday gifts to our top customers this year. Instead, our organization chose to donate to a local charity on behalf of these select clients. We were proud to support food banks, holiday gift-giving campaigns, research hospitals, military foundations, and workforce training centers catered to individuals of underprivileged backgrounds. This gesture was well-received by our clients, who thanked Aleron for its thoughtfulness and generosity.

Additionally, to lower energy usage, we recently upgraded all parking lot lights to LED models and installed a photocell control to help limit the amount of time that our exterior lights and sign are left on. These two changes alone will help to:

- Increase gross annual kWh savings to 27,257 kWh
- Increase annual electric cost savings to \$3,271
- Increase CO2 savings by 29,982 lbs.

## COVID-19 Response

To safeguard our employees from the COVID-19 pandemic, Aleron shifted to an entirely virtual workplace at the beginning of April. We transitioned our entire business model to one that embraced Microsoft Teams—a platform that quickly became our central workforce hub. Microsoft Teams has enabled our organization to seamlessly collaborate on projects, communicate in real-time via messenger, and store and share files with fellow employees. But most importantly, Teams allowed our organization to take part in virtual video conferences—thereby lessening our reliance on out-of-state travel and reducing our carbon footprint.

Upon the outbreak of the pandemic, Aleron abided by all federal, state, and local legislation while enforcing a COVID-19 Response Taskforce to monitor coronavirus hot-spots across the country. Our organization’s swift

action was critical in ensuring that our employees were well-protected while business operations remained uninterrupted.

Upon gaining clearance to resume office activity, Aleron enacted the following measures:

- Installation of hand sanitizing stations at office entrances
- Widespread distribution of disinfectant wipes to employees
- Installation of plexiglass shields at reception areas
- Redesign of office cubicles to promote social distancing protocols
- Implementation of employee sign-in/out sheets as a means of contact tracing

As stay-at-home orders limited our employees' in-office time throughout the year, Aleron reduced its overall carbon footprint. In addition to cutting down on overall gasoline consumption by restricting travel to and from work, we also made significant reductions in our usage of:

- Electricity
- Heating
- Paper
- Water

As a result of the pandemic and its emphasis on remote-working arrangements, we decided to eliminate two of our nationwide office locations. In addition, we downsized two other offices. These steps were critical in further lessening our overall environmental footprint and enhancing sustainability measures.

## Our Policies and Practices

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### Quality Policy Overview

It is Aleron's policy to provide workforce and business solutions that meet or exceed our customers' expectations. The defining elements of our quality policy include the timely placement of well-qualified candidates, efficient delivery of workforce management and business solutions, and provision of services valued by our customers in precise conformance with agreed-upon performance requirements.

To achieve outstanding customer service and retention, Aleron adheres to its quality policy by employing a quality management system based on continuous improvement. The Quality Manual—with its supporting digital documents of quality procedures, forms, quality goals and objectives, records, and other references—constitutes our Quality Management System.

### Child and Fair Labor Practices

Aleron complies with all state and provincial child labor laws. A "child," as defined by the work location, may be permitted to perform services for Aleron in limited circumstances after it has been determined that the job is administrative and does not require the operation of machinery.

## Health and Wellbeing Overview

Promoting the health and well-being of our employees is one critical factor that contributes to Aleron's commitment to social responsibility. Several years ago, we launched our Wellness Management & Screening Program. Today, employees and their spouses benefit from:

- Secure and confidential medical screenings consisting of 36 core lab tests
- Health risk appraisals
- Access to the Wellness, Inc. secure health portal
- Aleron's Wellness Incentive Program and discounts on insurance
- Telephone health coaching
- Wellness seminars with healthy lunch options provided
- Annual company-wide weight-loss challenges

This past year, Aleron established its own intranet site—Pearl. Featuring ease of access to important materials and a space to share company news and announcements, this vehicle has been critical in driving more efficient and effective communication within our organization. On Pearl, we have established a page dedicated to “Health & Wellness” resources. Our employees can receive helpful information on:

- Employee wellness program
- Mental health resources
- Face-to-face counseling
- Work-life needs
- Family care
- Health advocacy services

## Safety Policy

Aleron complies with all safety-related rules and regulations. Our managers and supervisors are responsible for coordinating with customers to promote safe work environments, while program administrators oversee the implementation of such policies.

Aleron provides fundamental employee safety orientation training in conjunction with the job-specific safety training offered by customers. Employees are instructed to remain aware of their work environments and to notify their customer's supervisor or Aleron representative immediately when a hazard or potentially unsafe condition exists that could cause injury or property damage.

No employee is ever required to perform work that he or she believes is unsafe, or that is likely to cause injury or pose a health risk, either to him or herself or to others. All injuries occurring while on the job—including minor injuries—must be reported immediately to both an Aleron representative and to a customer supervisor.

## Commitment to Our Community

We are proud to partner with community organizations across the country to further our dedication to a holistic corporate social responsibility approach. We believe that investing in the communities in which we work—in addition to cultivating a healthy and environmentally friendly organizational setting—leads to a stronger workforce and better business outcomes. Our recent holiday giving drive is just one example of how we engage our employees to help strengthen our communities for all.

Aleron consistently supports economic development, arts and culture, and philanthropy in the community to provide the best possible places for employees to work and live. We recognize our responsibility to support socio-economic growth in the regions within which we operate. Our organization has been supporting the worthwhile causes of many local and national partners for several decades. Namely, Aleron frequently sponsors a wide range of initiatives that promote artistic, cultural, and social growth and advancement.

## Purchasing

We have implemented an environmentally responsible delivery approach to help ensure minimal carbon emissions and pollution in our community. Purchases from multiple divisions are consolidated, while we have developed a best practice of an order size standard for all locations. This reduces the frequency of small, inefficient orders, thereby decreasing delivery trips and paper waste from boxes and other packaging materials. All orders are completed online, eliminating the need for paper catalogs.

Our organization has implemented an ink and toner recycling program. These items are routinely gathered at the same time as our office supply deliveries, thereby reducing the environmental costs of carbon emissions.

Office supplies and other needed facilities products often comprise a large percentage of a company's waste. At Aleron, we first look to products that are made of recycled materials, responsibly sourced, fully recyclable, and/or certified as EPA compliant. Our team has banned the purchase of Styrofoam and other harmful products across all offices to support smarter alternatives.

Aleron's sustainable vendors include:



Providers of soap and paper towel dispensers.



**Georgia-Pacific**

Providers of paper towels and toilet paper.



Most office furniture has been standardized to the HON brand, in which 75% of products are level certified and contribute to LEED credits.



All recycling efforts are handled by Modern Corporation, a locally owned and operated business that is committed to the environment. Modern Corporation utilizes innovative green power and builds partnerships with hundreds of local businesses.



**Sustainable Earth**

By Staples®

All office supply products are sourced from Staples, a national vendor that has been thoroughly vetted for quality and sustainability. We have analyzed our product usage to develop a core product list comprised of cost-effective, sustainable products wherever applicable.

Our paper products are derived from FSC-certified sources, including our approved paper brand, which is made of 100% post-consumer waste. We have also recently expanded our sustainable purchasing initiatives to include janitorial, facilities, and break-room products.

In addition, all promotional items are sourced through a WBENC-certified vendor. As new products are requested, our organization routinely evaluates sustainable options.

### **Supplier Diversity**

Aleron maintains relationships with over 150 diversity-certified staffing suppliers in support of our customers' requirements. Diversity staffing suppliers are identified through State and Federal databases, WBENC and NMSDC supplier portals, and our customers' current supply bases.

Aleron often recruits local and national suppliers—including women-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises—to supplement and enhance our service effort for many of our nationwide customers. Accordingly, we maintain relationships with diverse suppliers to support the delivery of our talent acquisition and workforce management services. We are also able to align firms selected by our customers, provided they can meet service-delivery requirements and contract terms.

### **Supplier Code of Conduct**

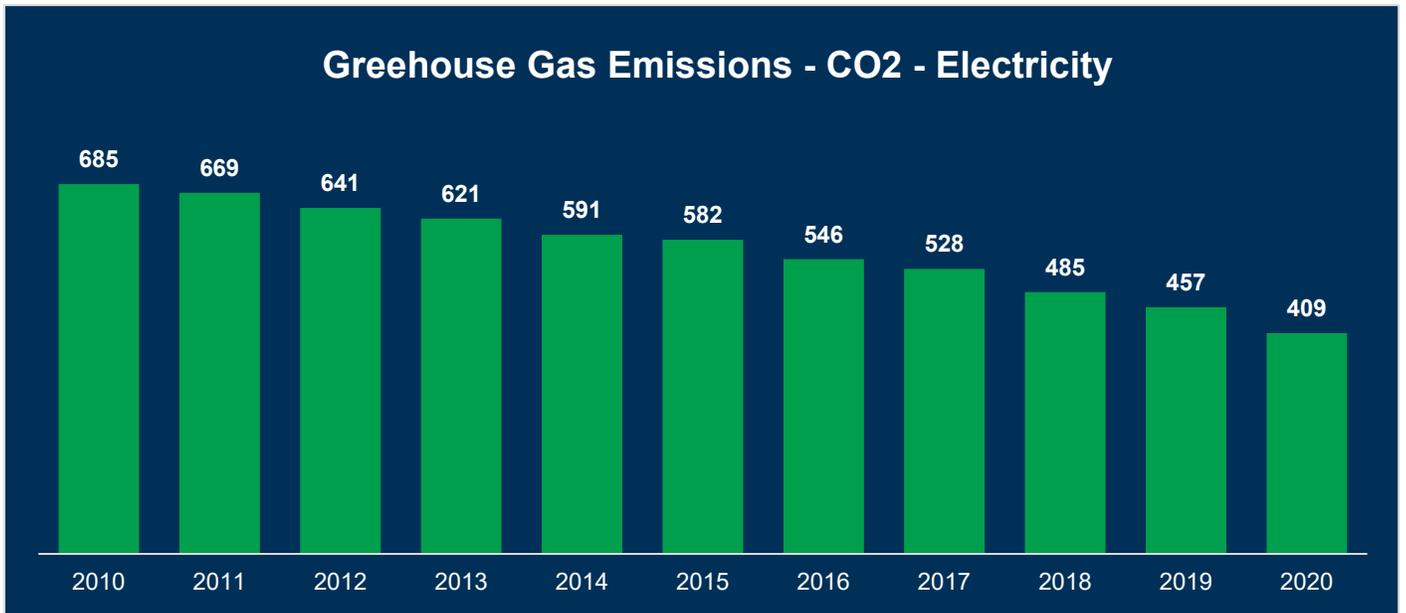
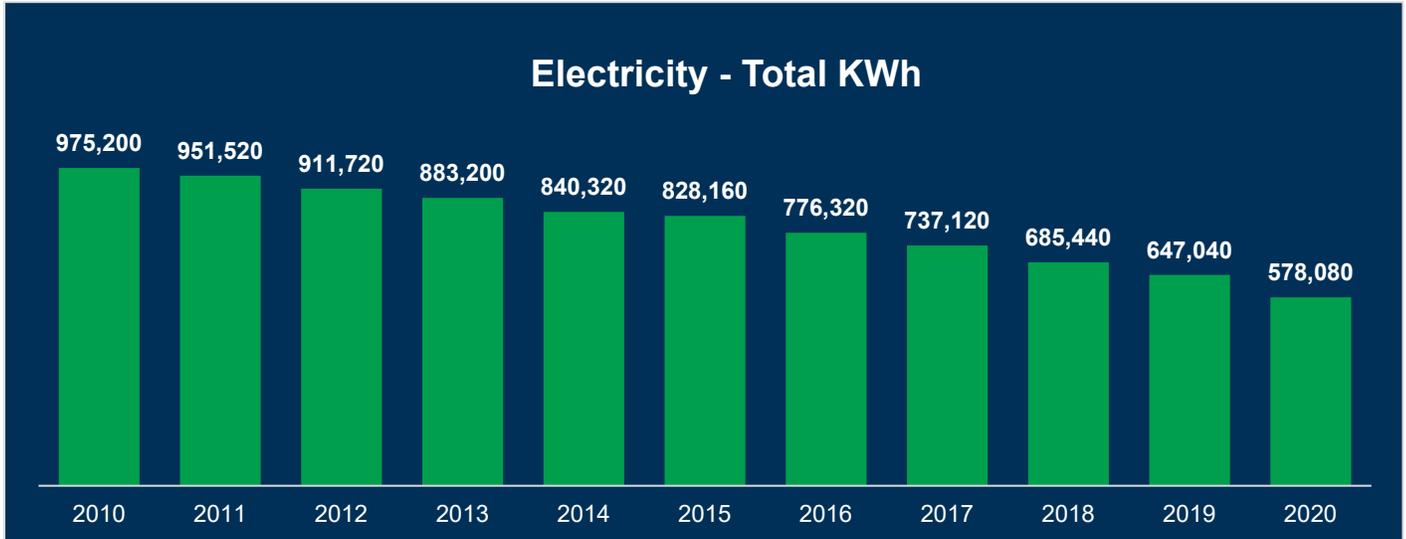
Our Code of Conduct defines the basic requirements placed on Aleron's suppliers of goods and services and concerning their responsibilities towards their stakeholders and the environment.

## **Our Environmental Impact**

Beginning in 2016, Aleron made many enhancements to lessen the environmental footprint at our corporate headquarters. We engaged a LEED-certified third-party facilities management company that implemented extensive updates in our heating, electrical, and water systems. Our cooling tower has also been upgraded with a new alarm system, valves, pipes, and flotation device, while HVAC filters are changed on a regular basis. These updates have increased the efficiency of our building systems.

## Ten-Year Look at Energy Management

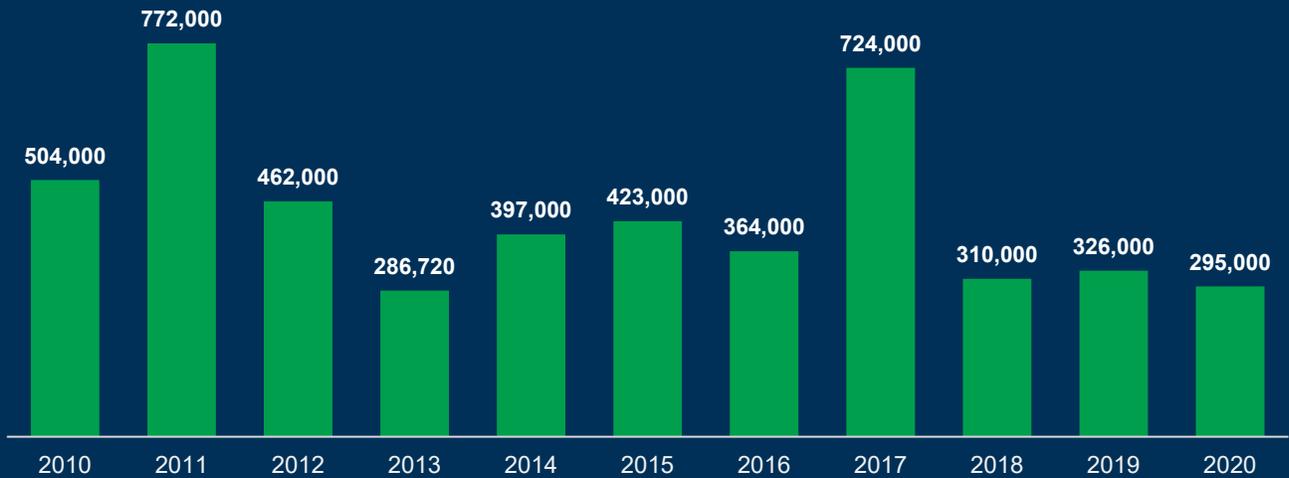
Using 2011 as our base year, we track our energy and water usage so that we can anticipate needs, create annual goals, and determine where additional third-party support is necessary.



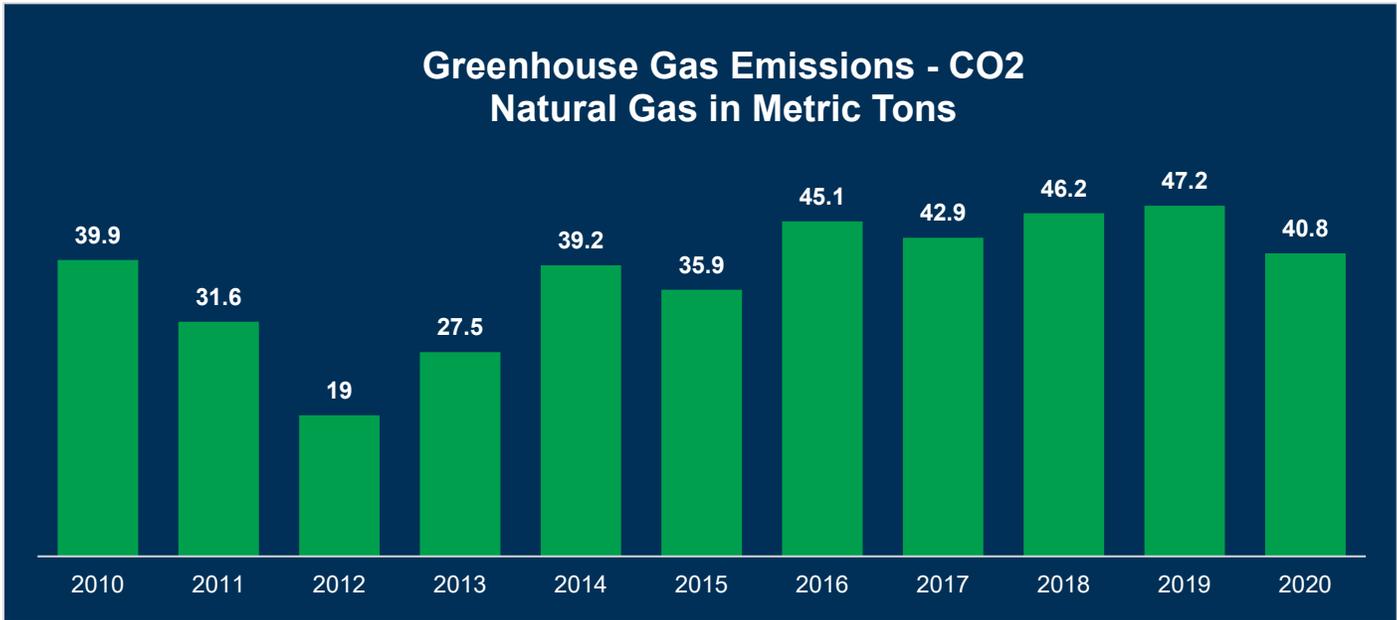
## Natural Gas - Total CCF



## Water - Total Gallons



## Greenhouse Gas Emissions - CO2 Natural Gas in Metric Tons



To further reduce water usage and associated waste, Aleron deployed filtered water solutions at our corporate location in 2013. These water stations provided employees with 29,540 gallons of water, preventing the purchase and waste of the equivalent of **223,733 plastic water bottles**.

### Recycling and Waste Reporting

While our line of business does not produce the sheer number of pollutants and hazardous waste as other industries, we are certainly not exempt from the need to reduce our overall carbon footprint. As our organization has historically been largely paper-intensive, we utilize Iron Mountain for the shredding and recycling of paper waste.

In addition, we decided to completely revamp our recruiting process by partnering with eStaff365, an online employee onboarding program. eStaff365 has drastically reduced our reliance on paper consumption, toner and ink usage, shipping costs, and storage needs.

### In Closing

Aleron will continue our commitment to sustainable business practices while educating our employees on the vital role that they play in safeguarding our environment and local communities. While we are proud of the steps that our organization has taken to date, we realize that there is more to be done. We have full confidence in our incredible employees and their ability to expand upon our existing sustainability initiatives to safeguard the health of our planet.

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