

**Aleron**

On the Green

**2023**

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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 our operations as well as our environment.

We remain cognizant of the many corporate and social responsibilities that come with being in business. We are more mindful than ever about our company's impact on the environment and our local community. Much of the business world has embraced this philosophy, helping to promote a greener economy everywhere.

Aleron's 2023 "On the Green" report details our efforts in support of a more sustainable future. As a community- and employee-focused company, we realize the need to operate in a way that promotes ethical, environmental, and economic growth and will continue to put these values into action.

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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 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 several 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 provides 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. We have also placed a greater emphasis on the use of online training. Digital resources help to reduce the amount of paper utilized and have been found to increase training consistency.
- **Online security training** – Aleron's Privacy and Security Office converted its annual, all-employee security training to an online format. These training sessions provide 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 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 has resulted in higher cooling capacity, less water loss, and increased effectiveness of inline water treatment.
- **WebEx implementation** – Aleron’s use of WebEx has resulted in a server reduction and the elimination of most desk phones within our organization.

To lower energy usage, we also upgraded all parking lot lights to LED models and installed a timer 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.

## 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. Today, employees and their spouses benefit from:

- Access to the Employee Assistance Program and ComPsych Guidance Resources



- Telephone health coaching
- Wellness seminars, on-demand videos, and tip sheets to help with mental wellbeing

In 2020, 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 ones, must be reported immediately to an Aleron representative and a customer supervisor.

## Commitment to Our Community

Aleron has committed to promoting social justice, community engagement, and economic empowerment in the communities it serves. 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 campaigns and volunteer initiatives are just a few examples of how we engage our employees to help strengthen our communities for all.

- During December, our Buffalo office once again 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. We also sponsored a family in need and purchased essential items from the wish list of a single mother with four children (ages 2, 6, 11, and 15).



- Aleron employees deliver meals in the Buffalo region. Every Thursday, two team members take an hour out of their day to pick up coolers and heated boxes from FeedMore and deliver meals to up to 10 people in need.
- Broadleaf planted 1,000 trees through a donation to the National Forest Foundation. At a conference where the company had an exhibit booth, attendees had the opportunity to spin a wheel to win prizes or plant a certain number of trees. After the event, we made a donation to plant the trees that had been “won” by attendees.
- Acara employees delivered a mock interview and resume workshop to IT security students at the Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology (BCAT). Our recruiters worked one-on-one with 9 students, helping to build their confidence and ensure their resumes included the right language to get the attention of prospective employers.
- The Acara Canada team volunteered at the Mississauga Food Bank, sorting 3,020 pounds of food which will provide 3,240 meals to community members in need.

Our organization has supported the worthwhile causes of many local and national partners for decades and we have identified four areas of concentration in support of our initiative:

- **Creating more employment opportunities for diverse and underserved individuals** – This plan focuses on promoting employment outreach, creating employment opportunities for underserved populations, and mentoring and coaching early-career women in the human resources profession. We believe that private industry must work and do its share to help create and deliver successful training and workforce preparedness programs to increase the recruiting and hiring of diverse candidates.
- **Bridging the digital divide for students and adults in underserved communities** – The widening digital equity gap is especially acute in poor and underserved communities and disproportionately impacts the chances of individuals of diverse backgrounds to have access to economic opportunities. Without critical access to infrastructure and technological resources, it is only a matter of time before many people find themselves completely locked out of the digital economy.
- **Identifying resources to deliver a sustainable food supply** – Millions of children and families face hunger and food insecurity every day. Hunger can affect people from all walks of life and many are one job loss or medical crisis away from food insecurity. Our goal is to generate initiatives that address hunger in our communities—like volunteering at local food banks, working with nonprofits to help more kids gain access to breakfast, and organizing food donation drives.
- **Supporting access to affordable housing** – Millions of Americans lack access to a safe and stable supply of affordable housing. In fact, the United States needs a minimum of 7.2 million more affordable housing units, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. This is a long-term investment in our communities—one with immeasurably high returns. We look for ways to help make our communities more inclusive and connected through zoning, fair housing laws, and access to public transportation.


## Purchasing


We have implemented an environmentally responsible delivery approach to help ensure minimal carbon emissions and pollution in our communities. 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 also 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 facility 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.

 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. We are also able to align firms selected by our customers, provided they can meet service-delivery requirements and contract terms.

### Technological Modernization

We recognize that technological modernization has become an increasingly important part of operating sustainably and increasing energy efficiency across our organization. By adopting new, automated tools, we can reduce downtime and operate more efficiently. Aleron's Information Technology department has several initiatives underway to aid in this process:

- **SuccessFactors** – We are preparing to launch a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS), SuccessFactors, that will integrate with our back-office SAP system to drive significant efficiencies in the way we manage HR and payroll data.
- **ServiceNow and procurement platform** – Our new service desk and procurement platform will allow our IT functions to operate more efficiently.
- **BYOD device management** – We will utilize Microsoft Intune to roll out device management, helping us to reduce monthly mobile phone usage.

## Our Environmental Impact

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Since 2016, Aleron has 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 cleaning towers have also been upgraded with a new alarm system, valves, pipes, and flotation device. These updates have decreased all of our utility usage and previously unavoidable waste.

### Ten-Year Look at Energy Management

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.



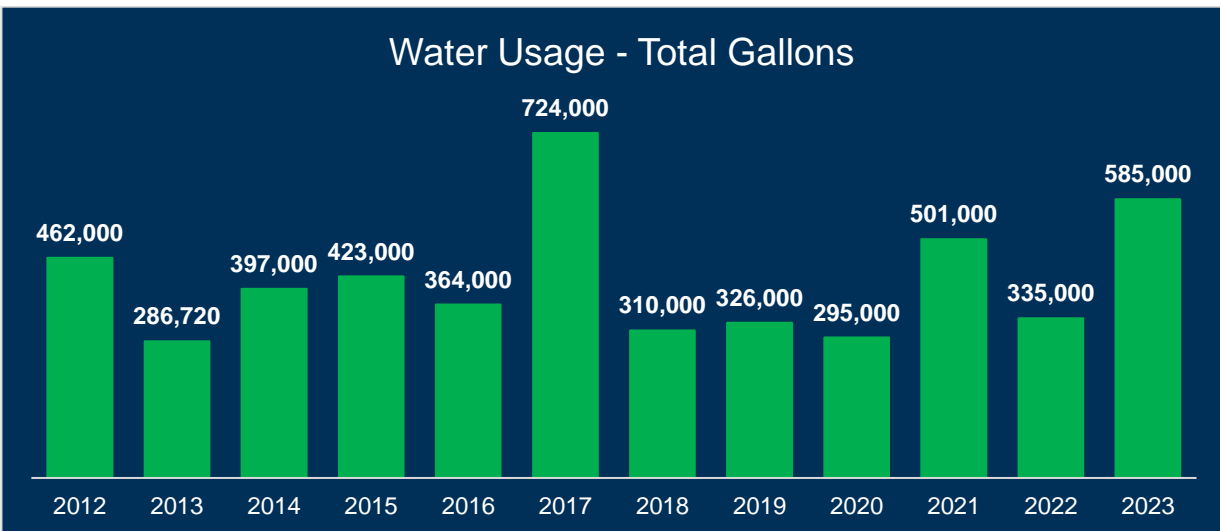
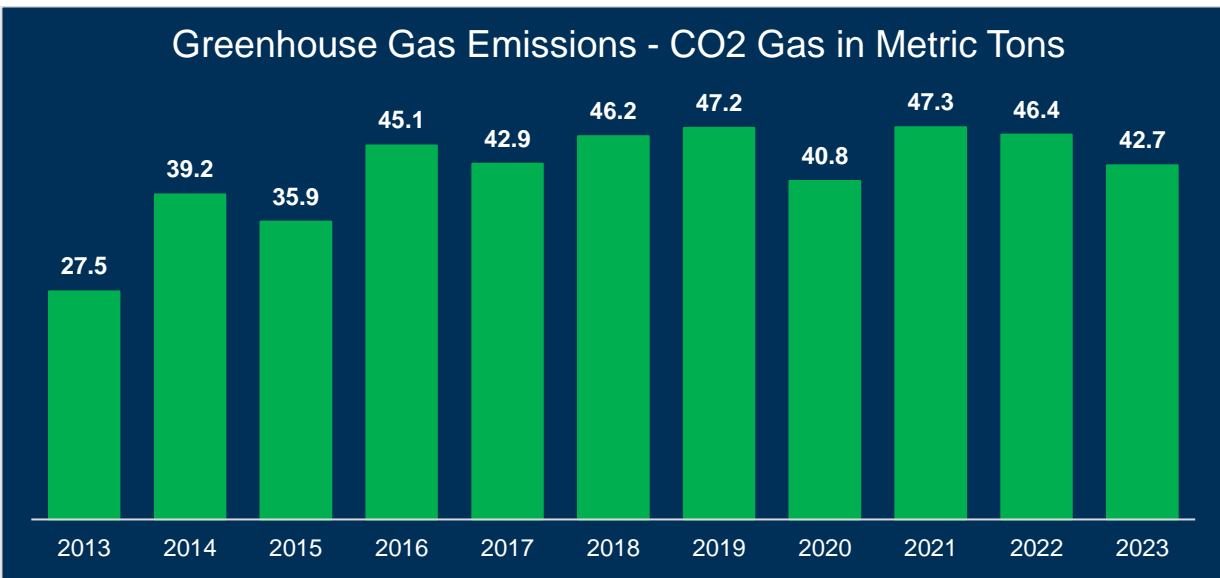
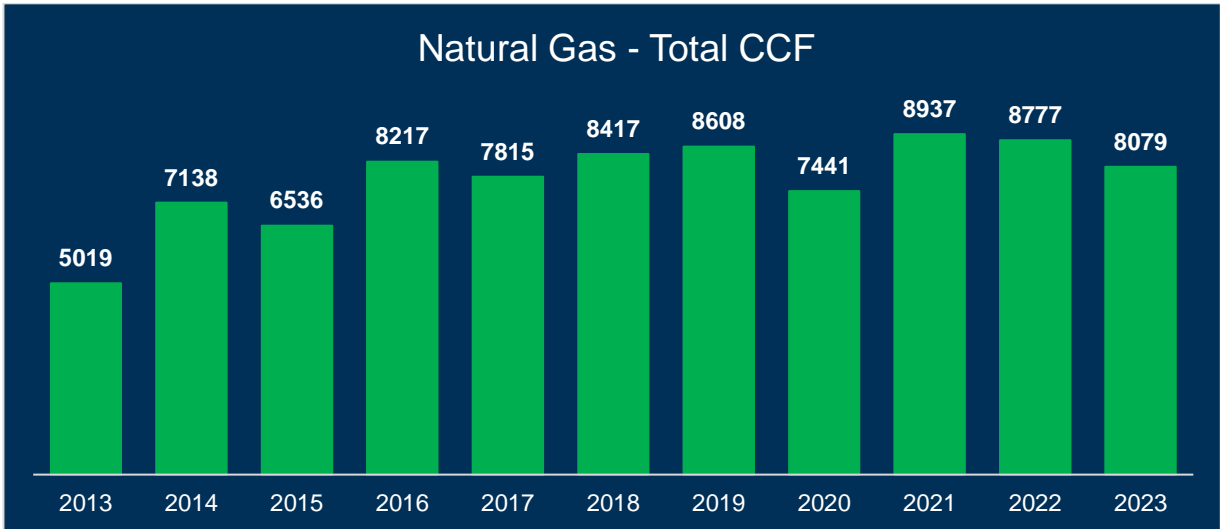
### Electricity - Total KWh



### Greenhouse Gas Emissions - CO2 - Electricity







## Recycling and Waste Reporting

While our line of business does not produce the sheer number of pollutants and hazardous waste as other industries, we still recognize 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

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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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