

Veterinary Green Theatre Checklist v1.0 (2025)

Preparing for surgery

1. Reduce clinically unnecessary interventions e.g. minimise variability in procedures & consumables, rationalise diagnostic tests and catheterisation ☐
2. Rationalise use of single-use items e.g. non-sterile single-use gloves, kennel liners ☐
3. Use surgical textiles rationally e.g. choose the appropriate gown considering the procedure, switch to reusable gowns, drapes and instrument wraps, consider field sterility ☐
4. "Rub don't scrub": after first hand wash of day, use hand sanitiser for subsequent cases ☐
5. Review equipment packs to consolidate equipment into reusable sets, and rationalise re-sterilisation protocols ☐
6. Source renewable electricity; switch to electric heating, lighting and energy systems where possible ☐

Using pharmaceuticals

7. Ensure rational choices for pharmaceutical use ☐
8. Decommission nitrous oxide and desflurane ☐
9. Reduce volatile consumption (where safe and appropriate) by planning carefully to minimise duration of anaesthesia, and use of lower flow anaesthesia ☐
10. Choose lower carbon pharmaceutical options (where safe and appropriate) e.g. sevoflurane over isoflurane; oral over parenteral routes of administration ☐
11. Consider injectable techniques such as regional anaesthesia, PIVA, and TIVA (where safe and appropriate) ☐
12. Open pharmaceuticals and equipment only when needed ☐
13. Ensure unwanted pharmaceuticals are disposed safely, and encourage returns of medications (if unused or out-of-date) ☐

During surgery

14. Limit CO₂ insufflation in minimally invasive surgery ☐
15. Transfer single-use items with the animal if still needed e.g. suction tubing, warming consumables ☐
16. Consider reusable or refurbished equipment and consumables for anaesthesia (e.g. laryngoscopes, warming equipment, kennel liners, CO₂ absorbent canisters) and surgery (e.g. theatre hats, facemasks, surgical textiles, staplers, sterile containers) ☐
17. Choose lower carbon equipment options (where safe and appropriate) e.g. skin sutures vs. clips, passive warming systems, use of gallipots for surgical preparation ☐

After surgery

18. Introduce "shut-down" and "power-on" checklists for heating, ventilation, air conditioning, AGSS, lights, computers, autoclaves and other equipment ☐
19. Encourage active maintenance and repair of equipment ☐
20. Segregate waste into the lowest carbon (appropriate) waste stream e.g. optimising recycling waste streams (electrical waste, cardboard/paper, metals, plastics, organic waste, pet hair), prioritising non-infectious offensive waste streams where appropriate, ensuring appropriate contents in healthcare waste containers (only uncontaminated packaging in recycling) and switching to lower impact containers where appropriate (reusable, cardboard, larger volume containers) ☐

This project is an independent, AVA-led scientific initiative supported by an educational grant from Dechra.



The VGTC v1.0 consists of 20 recommendations to reduce the environmental impact of veterinary operating theatres when preparing for surgery, using pharmaceuticals, during surgery, and after surgery.

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Responsibility remains with the user to prioritise animal and staff safety, seek expert advice before changing protocols as required and to remain in compliance with local regulations.



DISCLAIMER: These suggestions are based on current evidence collated by the authors of the VGTC v1.0 and are broadly generalisable; however, specific environmental impacts will depend upon local infrastructure and individual clinic implementation strategies.

Footnote: Veterinary Green Theatre Checklist v1.1 (2026).

