50 Ways to Green Your Business

Actionable and inspiring
ideas to protect our planet

ambius
Enhancing Interior Landscapes

Energy savings

☐ Turn out the lights or use motion-activated lights.

☐ Turn the temperature up or down by a degree.

☐ Use ceiling fans to help circulate air.

☐ Use shades or blinds. Using shades and blinds can help keep natural heat out of the building and minimize cooling costs.

☐ Install window tinting to maximize heating and cooling.

☐ Replace traditional incandescent or fluorescent lighting with more energy-efficient compact fluorescent (CFL) or LED lights.

☐ Encourage staff to turn off monitors, computers, printers, and other equipment at night and when away from their desks.

☐ Perform an energy audit to identify where you are energy inefficient. In some states, power companies will conduct these at no charge.

☐ Update old appliances with more energy-efficient new appliances. Your energy savings may justify the cost of new equipment.

☐ Seal gaps, cracks, and holes, especially around windows and doors. This will keep warm and cool air from escaping — and keep pests out.

☐ Install door sweeps. Gaps under doors can be a culprit in energy loss.

☐ Install a green roof. When installed properly and carefully maintained, green roofs can help reduce energy costs and help with pollinator health.

☐ Pursue LEED or Green Building Certification. These recognized sustainability initiatives can help you increase energy savings and realize sustainability

Landscaping

☐ Use native plants in your landscaping efforts; these plants are adapted to your environment, use less water, and help support local ecosystems and wildlife.

☐ Minimize the use of turf grass, which can be a water hog.

☐ Be sure that automatic sprinkler or watering systems are not over watering. A landscaping expert can help you determine needed frequency.

Use indoor plants

☐ Plants improve indoor air quality, which can have an impact on wellness. Plants filter CO_2 from the atmosphere, can reduce levels of certain pollutants, and minimize dust — creating healthier air for employees and visitors.

☐ Living green walls and plants serve as acoustic filters to reduce noise.

☐ Ask your interior landscaper about using plant containers made from recycled or reusable material.

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Office supplies, printing, and paper usage

- ☐ Start a toner cartridge recycling program.
- ☐ Use draft quality settings to use less ink.
- ☐ Always print double-sided.
- ☐ Decrease page margins to use more of the paper.
- ☐ Use a different font – some fonts use less ink.
- ☐ Print only what you need.
- ☐ Utilize digital documents when possible: meetings, sales collateral, and more.
- ☐ Use paper and packaging with 100% post-consumer waste content.
- ☐ Use re-fillable ink pens. The U.S. Environmental protection agency estimates that Americans throw away 1.6 billion disposable pens per year.

Trash and waste

- ☐ Consider implementing a recycling program.
- ☐ Invest in paper shredding and recycling services to reduce landfill waste.
- ☐ Reduce use of single-use items: Styrofoam, plates, utensils, and cups.
- ☐ If you have a contract, consider less frequent waste pickups.
- ☐ Practice e-cycling. Ask your suppliers about ways to recycle electronic equipment to keep this excess waste out of landfills.

Indoor water use

- ☐ Install automatic or motion-activated sinks to reduce how long water runs.
- ☐ Install low-flow toilets.
- ☐ With an up-front investment, rain water or grey water (water that has already been used once and then filtered) can be used to water indoor plants..

Fleet management

- ☐ Utilize route management software to minimize miles being driven.
- ☐ Institute regular tire pressure checks. Under-inflated tires can increase fuel consumption by up to 2 percent.
- ☐ Go right: Eliminating left turns from its routes in 2007, UPS reduced CO_2 emissions by 32,000 metric tons and saved 3 million gallons of gas.
- ☐ Install fleet management software in vehicles to encourage better driving practices. Monitor drivers for behaviors that can decrease efficiency and safety.
- ☐ Slow down. Fuel consumption increases dramatically at speeds over 70 miles per hour (mph) for most vehicles — as much as 25 percent for just 10 mph faster.

Business partnerships

- ☐ Use a green web hosting company. These companies ensure that the power generating their servers is coming from a renewable power source.
- ☐ Ask your maintenance/cleaning staff to use environmentally-friendly products.
- ☐ Hire a company to care for plants to ensure plant health and proper watering.

Staff programs

- ☐ Make green part of company culture. Incorporate it into mission statements, applaud efforts, and use signage to encourage actions that help the environment.
- ☐ Provide staff members with their own re-usable water bottles to reduce disposable cup usage – consider earth-friendly materials instead of plastic.
- ☐ Coordinate a ride share program in the office to reduce miles being driven.
- ☐ Offer incentives for using public transportation, walking, or biking to work.
- ☐ Provide a potted plant or succulent for each staff member's desk.
- ☐ Cultivate a community garden where staff members and neighbors can care for and pick their own fruits and vegetables.