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GREEN WORKPLACE

Making the environment more pleasant for yourself, more energy efficient, and more eco-friendly will increase your enjoyment of the workplace and lessen its impact on the environment as a whole.



I F YOU ARE already taking environmentally friendly steps at home, it is a natural extension to take similar measures at work, both to save energy and to create a healthier workspace environment.

Being energy and resource efficient and conscious of improving the health and well-being of the work environment will also reduce the costs of running a business. It's time to "go green" at work, and here is how:

■ **Feel empowered** - You don't need to be management to institute change; your role as someone who cares about improving the energy efficiency and healthiness of your workplace is just as vital as those able to make the "big decisions". In fact, change from the bottom-up is often a lot more effective as everyone has "buy-in".

■ **Conserve your computer's energy**
- For many people with desk jobs, the

computer is absolutely necessary to get things done. Yet, this "efficiency" comes at a cost - it is estimated that people waste over \$1 billion in electricity every year just in computer use! To help conserve energy from your computer use, you can:

- Invest in an energy-saving computer, monitor and printer.
- Switch to energy-saving settings.
- Turn off your computer whenever you're not using it, especially when leaving work. And note that it isn't true that turning your computer on and off will wear it out.
- **Turn off all peripherals when not in use** - Peripherals such as printers, video cards, speakers, and scanners continue to consume power even when not in use. Unplug them and save energy.
- Unplug power adapters when not in use.
- Unplug battery chargers when the charging is complete, otherwise they are still consuming energy.
- Using a power strip as a central turn-off point can reduce the number of switching off actions required.
- **Reduce printer use** - The printer is one of the most used office items. Every day it cranks out tons of important faxes, emails and other documents. Here are some ways you make your printer use greener:
- Try not to print in colour.
- Use a printer that does double-sided

copying.

- Print in draft mode. In addition, try to print more screen pages to a paper page.
- Recycle ink and toner cartridges - learn how to refill and reuse a printer cartridge.

■ **Reduce your paper waste** - Do you really have to print out every email and handout? Reduce paper waste by deciding to go paperless wherever possible. You can try to:

- Keep copies of important emails, files, and more on your computer.
- Use old paper with extra space to print small documents.
- Get your check directly deposited. Payment direct to your bank account saves paper.
- Send company updates through email instead of on paper.

■ **Prioritise your paper use** - If you do use paper on a daily basis then you can make eco-friendly paper choices. Here are some things you can do:

- Buy recycled and chlorine-free paper.
- Print on both sides of the paper.
- Shred old paper to use as packing material.
- Save and reuse old boxes.
- Use old sheets of paper for scrap paper or note-taking.

■ **Reduce energy usage** - Along with reducing the energy usage of your computer and peripherals, there are a number of broader ways to reduce energy usage in the workplace:

- Replace your desk lamp light bulbs and overhead lights (where possible).
- Turn lights off when

nobody is using an office, conference room, your workspace, or the whole office at night.

■ **Maintain healthy air flow** - If you work in an office, cubicle, or workshop, it is likely that you are spending most of your time indoors - a survey found that people spend over 96% of time at home indoors, and over 83% of time at work, or school indoors, equalling about 40 or more hours at your desk, office, or cubicle.

■ **Green your desk, cubicle, office**
- Get a plant and place it on or near your desk. Or, even better, buy plants for all your neighbours. They will not only see this as a friendly gesture, but they will also have cleaner air to breathe! Plants absorb indoor air pollution, and increase the flow of oxygen, so get a green accessory to complement your desk!

■ **Recycle** - There are many things in your office that you can recycle. If you don't have a recycling station at work, start one on your own. You can get a few bins and post recycling guidelines above them. Some of them may include recycling:

- Paper products like copy paper, envelopes, magazines
- Soda cans and plastic bottles
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic bags
- Ink cartridges

- Compiled by 1Klassifieds Team

