

GREENING THE WORKPLACE

Introduction

Work places can be wasteful places. Because it's not directly our electricity bill, our stationery or our computer, we tend to be careless with our use of resources. This guide aims to help you at a practical level. By providing ideas and suggestions for using resources more effectively and efficiently, it will help you make a personal contribution to a better environment. There are many simple ways of conserving resources, reducing consumption and saving money.

Each year at work, the average individual uses 12,000 litres of water, 1.1 tonnes of coal (as fuel in power stations), 100 kg's of paper, 583 litres of petrol and produces 180 kg's of waste, more than two and a half times average body weight.

Air Pollution & Transport

What Can You Do?

Air Pollution Management - Our studies show that much of the Borough suffers from high levels of air pollution. The Council and Council staff must "Do their Bit" to help bring the levels down. After all it's the air you breathe!

Walk, Don't Drive - For a short journey you use a lot of petrol, around 40 litres per 100 km within the first kilometre. Normal petrol consumption is reached only after four kilometres.

Hounslow Council's Travel Plan - About two thirds of Civic Centre staff drive to work. More than 2 million miles are travelled each year by car on Council business alone. Clearly even a small percentage reduction could be significant. If we can make a reduction in the number of car miles then it's a good start in creating a healthier environment for us to live and work in.

Regular Check Ups - Have your car serviced according to the handbook. Spark plugs play a major role in achieving optimum combustion of the fuel-air mixture. Changing an air filter regularly can reduce fuel consumption by up to 10%.

Check Your Tyres - Driving with wrongly inflated tyres can increase fuel consumption by 5%, and can lead to uneven wear.

Buying a New Car - Consider one which runs on liquid petroleum gas (LPG) this fuel may be half the price of petrol.

Drive Smoothly - Driving quickly consumes more fuel than a restrained driving style and produces twice as much Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). Driving at 70 mph can use up to 30% more petrol than at 50 mph.

Switch Off - At traffic lights or in a jam switch your engine off and cut down on your emissions to the surrounding environment.

Share a Car - Travel to work with a colleague and share the fuel costs, whilst cutting down on the emissions you produce.

And Finally - Next time you need to make a car journey please think whether it may be easier to walk, cycle or hop on a bus - you may be surprised how easy it is.

Waste

What Can You Do?

Reuse Paper - A4 and A5 waste paper can be reused as scrap pads, to write down messages and other notes. By doing this you will reduce the amount of paper being used and ultimately wasted.

Readdress it - Reuse envelopes wherever possible for both internal and external mail.

Double Sided - Copying on both sides of paper saves 50% of energy, paper and money.

Duplex Printing - Print on both sides of the paper, and reduce the amount of paper you use by up to 50%.

Photocopying - If each copier in the UK used five fewer sheets of paper every working day, 2.5 million reams of paper could be saved, the equivalent of 200,000 trees.

Use E-Mail - Use the email system to distribute reports, this avoids the unnecessary wastage of paper.

Pen for Life - Keep and care for your own pen. Over 240 million disposable pens made from plastic and toxic inks are sold in the UK each year. How about using a pen with reusable cartridges.

Batteries - In the UK we use 400 million a year, most end up in landfill. So why not buy rechargeable batteries? A battery thrown away has taken 50 times more energy to produce than it ever provides, or try using solar powered items, eg calculators.

Use a Mug - Keep your own personal mug and so avoid using disposable cups. If one million people used their own mugs in the office each day we could eliminate as many as 1.25 billion cups from going to landfill.

Purchasing - When you buy or order stationery and other materials for the office, exercise your purchasing power! Why not opt for green products, such as solvent free marker pens, recycled pencils and pens, green correction fluid and recycled note pads. - see "Green Guide" on rear cover.

Energy & Water

What Can You Do?

Press the Save Button - Some photocopiers in standby mode can use as little as 30 watts, just press the 'energy save' button when you have finished photocopying.

Energy Saving Device - Activate your power saving device on your computer, which will power down your machine when you are not using it (ask IT staff if you are unsure whether or not you have the device).

Lights - When you have finished your meeting in a Committee Room and other rooms remember to turn the lights off.

Kettles - If you are boiling a kettle and it's only for you, don't fill it to the top, this will save on water and reduce the electricity being used.

Taps - When washing your hands or cups/plates don't run water unnecessarily and put the plug in to save on the amounts of water that you use.

Urns - If you see one boiling away, turn it down to reduce the amount of electricity and water being used.

Fact or Fiction?

Motor vehicles are the fastest growing source of air pollution. A car uses 4,000 gallons of petrol in its lifetime. **True.** The car also produces 4.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) annually.

If just one per cent of people walked or cycled to work in the UK, 400,000 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) would not be produced each year and 140,000 cars would be taken off the roads. **True.**

Continually switching a PC on and off will significantly damage it. **False.** A PC is less likely to become obsolete long before it stops working because it has been repeatedly switched on and off.

It takes a lot of energy to start up a fluorescent light, so there's no point in switching it off. **False.** With modern lighting it makes sound financial and environmental sense to switch it off, if has been on for more than five minutes.

Low energy light bulbs are more expensive. **False.** They last up to eight times longer and use only 20% the energy of a normal light bulb.

One simple way of improving air quality in the office is to bring in some plants. **True.** Plants absorb pollutants, convert them into food and so clean the air, and improve the humidity levels in an air-conditioned office.

Over 7 billion drink cans are thrown away each year. **True.** 4 Billion are made from aluminium, only 15% of which are recycled. But recycling aluminium is worthwhile. Only 5% of the energy used in making the original can goes into recycling it.

Leaking taps waste money and natural resources. **True.** A leaking tap wastes up to 5000 litres a year.

If everyone in the UK turned off their taps, whilst brushing their teeth, they would collectively save as much water in a week as it would take to fill the Millennium Dome. **True.**

An ordinary computer left on all the time uses around £96 worth of electricity each year. **True.** But if it is only on for six hours daily for 200 working days then less than £13 worth of electricity is consumed - a saving of around £83 per computer per year.

If all electrical appliance stand-by buttons (like the ones on your TV's) in the UK were turned off at night, it would save enough energy to supply the city of Reading for a whole year. **True.**

If every home in the UK replaced one 100 Watt light bulb with one 20 Watt compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb, the amount of energy saved would be equivalent to that produced by Sizewell B power station. **True.** If the three most used light bulbs in every household were replaced with CFLs, household emissions of (CO₂) would be cut by 6.7%.

At Home

What Can You Do?

In Your Garden - Install a rain butt onto a downpipe to collect rain water from your roof. This water could be used for washing your car or watering plants.

Taps - Repair dripping taps. One dripping tap can waste 5,000 litres of water a year.

Hippos - Fit a hippo, this is a water saving device in your toilet cistern, it will save you up to one third of water per flush.

TV Stand-by - Turn your TV off at night, by leaving it on stand-by you will be using almost as much electricity as if you left it on.

Lights - Turn your lights off when you leave a room and turn off unnecessary lighting when there is sufficient natural lighting. Where possible use energy efficient light bulbs.

Bags - Reuse your plastic carrier bags, when you visit the supermarket, or use a reusable canvas bag.

Recycled Items - Wherever possible try to buy recycled goods and materials such as kitchen roll, refuse sacks and writing paper. This will help to stimulate the recycling markets.

Shopping - Try to buy items in bulk, or loose, or opt for things in glass/steel containers rather than in plastic. If you do this you will cut down on the amount of waste (especially packaging) that you throw away.

Recycling - Recycle what you can, and take it to your local recycling site or alternatively you could use a free recycling box to put your recyclables in ready for collection from your house. Contact your local council recycling officer for details.

Composting - Up to a third of your rubbish is compostable, why not compost your garden and kitchen waste, and use it on your garden. Contact your council recycling officer to see if you can get a free or subsidised rate composter.

Heating - By turning your thermostat down by 1-degree centigrade, or using one hour less of heating a day, you could cut your fuel bills by 10%.

Windows - If it is too hot in your house, turn down the heating instead of opening a window (you are only throwing money away if you don't).

Insulation - Try and insulate your roof space (loft), walls, windows and hot water tank/pipes, this will reduce heat loss and save you money on your bills.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



"Please display this leaflet in your office to remind others of how they can help"

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