

Greening Your Business

West Hollywood hosts some of the most cutting edge and creative businesses in fashion, food, and entertainment. The “greening of business” is another opportunity for the West Hollywood business community to demonstrate their forward thinking and innovative designs, while saving money with reduced energy bills and waste. This brochure outlines ten steps businesses can take to greening their operations and practices.

1- Evaluate how your business affects the environment.

- Conduct a life-cycle assessment to review "cradle-to-grave" impacts of your products (from the raw materials to their manufacture, sale, use, and disposal).
- Identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce waste, improve quality, save money, and provide products that are more environmentally appealing to customers.

2- Develop sustainability plan with gradual, incremental steps.

- Appoint an energy manager or team.
- Engage and educate staff.
- Create internal awareness and green behavior incentives.
- Create statement of environmental responsibility.
- Review all federal, state, and local laws for environmental compliance.

3- Measure and track your waste.

- Measure and quantify consumption (energy, supplies, raw materials, etc).
- Attempt to measure and quantify waste.
 - count or weigh trash bags and recycling on weekly or monthly basis
 - check utility bills
 - use an emissions calculator
 - consider packaging, raw materials, and paper trail
 - hire professional to recommend ways to reduce energy and redesign products or distribution to save money and reduce waste

4- Reduce Waste.

- Develop workplace recycling system for paper, plastics, aluminum, and glass.
- Encourage employees to reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Consider composting food waste.
- Examine manufacturing processes for opportunities to increase materials-use efficiency.
- Rethink product packaging.
- Research recycling programs for unwanted electronic equipment.

5- Commit to using environmentally preferable products.

- Identify opportunities to purchase recycled, refurbished, or reconditioned products where they compete favorably in price, performance, and quality with new ones.
- Whenever possible, use specific criteria — for example, paper purchases must contain at least 50% post-consumer recycled material.
- Work with your regular suppliers to identify their willingness to comply with your policy. Seek out alternative suppliers and let employees and suppliers know you expect materials and products to meet environmental standards.
- Consider leasing copiers, computers, and other equipment from manufacturers that will take back and properly recycle their goods at their "end of life."
- Make it easy on yourself — let the lessor repair and properly dispose of the equipment. You also could buy equipment used and refurbished.

Greening Your Business

- Consider renting equipment that is used only occasionally. Alternatively, consider sharing seldom-used machines or equipment with other businesses in your area.

6- Use Energy Efficiently. (see Energy Efficiency Brochure)

- Perform energy audit.
- Purchase Energy Star appliances.
- Practice energy reduction (night-lights off, power saving settings).
- Evaluate heating and cooling systems (Is building properly insulated? Are the windows double-paned? Are there air leaks? By maintaining your heating and cooling systems, you can reduce your heating and cooling bills. Systems that are checked annually and kept in good condition use less energy and last longer.)
- Make use of natural ventilation (windows) and natural light.
- Research use of alternative energy.

7- Conserve Water.

- Conduct a water audit to find faucets and toilets that leak, and have them fixed as soon as possible. Check for leaks frequently.
- Promote water-efficient landscaping (See Landscaping Brochure).
- Consider low-flow faucets, toilets, and shower heads.
- Collect rain water for irrigating and other non-potable uses.
- Reuse water in manufacturing and rinsing procedures: recirculate cooling water, eliminate plenum flushes, convert from continuous flow to intermittent flow, and improve control of the use of deionized water.

8- Reduce Toxics and Hazardous Substances.

- Evaluate all parts of your company, from the front office to the loading dock to the factory floor, to identify opportunities to reduce the use of toxic substances.
- Talk with suppliers about alternatives to solvents, paints, cleaners, and other products that may contain toxic substances.
- Create a plan to ensure that all employees safely dispose of toxic substances, including batteries, copier toner, paints, motor oil, dyes, and solvents.
- Check with West Hollywood to find hazardous waste disposal facilities in your area.
- Look into environmentally friendly printing products and processes. Whenever possible, use recycled paper that is bleached without chlorine. Seek out printers that use water-based press cleaners and soy- or other vegetable-based inks. When designing printing projects, avoid elements that reduce recyclability, such as foil stamping, adhesives, and plastic bags.

9- Evaluate Travel.

- Encourage alternative transportation (bus subsidies, carpool opportunities, bike parking and showers).
- Provide parking cashout policy for non-drivers.
- Encourage employees to use "pay-by-the-mile" auto insurance.
- Invest in a green fleet for service vehicles.
- Create telecommuting possibilities.

10- Reinforce Success.

- Seek recognition for your environmental efforts. Apply for corporate environmental awards to benchmark your successful sustainability efforts.
- Calculate your facility's carbon emissions and work to offset them through tree planting, forest protection efforts, and energy-efficiency projects.

Greening Your Business

- Investigate state and local initiatives that provide financial incentives for environmental efforts. Other programs might offer extensive hands-on assistance for corporate environmental efforts.
- Share your experience with other companies. By making your green vision a reality, you've likely become a useful resource on how to work cleaner, leaner, and more profitably. Put your knowledge and experience to work by developing or participating in a corporate environmental mentoring program. Mentoring will help reinvigorate your company's environmental efforts, encourage the growth of new ideas, and provide opportunities for effective networking.

The following websites offer tips on "greening your business."

http://www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/essentials_third.cfm?LinkAdvID=15205

<http://www.nrdc.org/cities/living/gbusiness.asp>

http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1/memoranda/ereseerem_gd.pdf

Specific suggestions for the businesses below can be found at the Energy Star Website.

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=small_business.sb_index

- * Auto Dealers
- * Grocery & Convenience Stores
- * Home Based Businesses
- * Lodging
- * Industry
- * Renters & Tenants
- * Restaurants
- * Service & Product Providers (SPPs)