

10 Tips for a Green Office



Creating a greener office means that you are committed to reducing impacts on the environment and providing a healthy place to work. It also means that your business will save money through saving energy and reducing waste. A commitment to change future practices is an important step to a Green office. Pick one or two new practices that support your goal. You will be on your way to discovering activities that support the environment, a healthier work place and save money.

1. **Turn it off** -You will always save electricity by turning off devices when not in use. Putting a computer to “sleep” also uses less power. Set the Power settings on your computer to automatically go into Sleep/Standby mode after 15 minutes or so of inactivity. Getting into the habit of turning off lights, turning up the thermostat for air conditioning and turning off devices when not in use will save you money. Set all office equipment to energy saving settings.

2. **Energy Audit** -A free energy audit will help you identify and evaluate cost effective energy-saving measures for your business that will save you money. <http://www.progress-energy.com/custservice/flabusiness/efficiency/CA/index.asp>

3. **Save more Energy** -Compact fluorescent light bulbs use 75% less energy and last 10 times longer than standard incandescent bulbs. http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr_cfls

4. **Reduce Paper** - For large copy projects always print on both sides of the paper. Use e-mail for routed copies. Use the back of waste paper for notes and draft copies. Reset the margins on documents wider to use less paper.

5. **Green Office Products** - Look for and compare green certified products to those you are currently using (Green Seal, Green Guard, Energy Star). Use green certified cleaning products for the office. Use at least 30% post consumer content recycled paper. Look for office products and packaging made from recycled materials and that are biodegradable.

6. **Reduce- Reuse -Recycle** - During the past 35 years, the amount of waste each person creates has almost doubled from 2.7 to 4.4 pounds per day. The most effective way to stop this trend is by preventing waste in the first place. Only purchase what you need, reuse products and packaging,

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and buy products with recycled content or that can be recycled. Recycling diverted 82 million tons of material away from landfills and incinerators in 2006, up from 34 million tons in 1990. <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/index.htm>

7. **Recycle** - Place a bin by your desk to collect all wastepaper and recycle it. Recycling paper saves, trees, energy, water and reduces waste to landfills and air pollution. Making new paper from recycled paper uses 30 – 55% less energy than making paper from trees and reduces related air pollution. About 77% of paper waste generated in an office is recyclable. Office paper is recycled into office paper, tissue paper, paper towels and toilet paper.

8. **Reduce Waste**—Product packaging adds significantly to our waste stream. Look for bulk packaging of products, products with less packaging and products that that can be recycled.

9. **Save Water** - Outdoor water use can consume 50 % or more of your overall water use. In Florida, water is a precious resource. Follow your local watering restrictions, use low volume irrigation, and use rain sensors to turn off irrigation automatically. Follow Florida-friendly landscaping principles to have a beautiful landscape (contact Jim Davis UF/IFAS Sumter County Extension for more information at 352.753.0124)

10. **Junk Mail and Catalogs** - Reduce the waste of paper and disposal by reducing unwanted catalogs and junk mail. <http://opt-out.cdt.org> The National Waste Prevention Coalition provides a postcard to send to mailers to have your name removed from lists. <http://www.metrokc.gov>

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