



## **GREEN ASSIST PROGRAM**

### BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

#### **OVERVIEW**

After deciding to become a “green” business, we began researching what actions were necessary to achieve that goal. We searched for a resource that gave us an easy to follow “How To Become Green” roadmap, but were unable to find one. So, in an effort to assist like minded companies, we prepared this document as a simple and practical way to help any business assess their current environmental situation, and then take reasonable and common sense steps that will make a difference, not just for the environment, but also in the way your associates and customers view your company. Each business must determine the amount of time, effort and expense they can or want to put into this effort, but realistically, every business in the Puget Sound area will at some time be compelled to become a “green business” either through regulation or through pressure exerted by customers and associates. In our experience it is a positive and affirming process that everyone will support, so why not get started now?

#### **THE GREEN DIVIDEND**

The “Green Dividend” is the economic benefit that a company receives from “greener” behavior. Business decisions that take into account environmental impact can also have financial rewards. For example, retrofitting the lighting in our 30,000 square foot facility will reduce our lighting bill by about \$7600 per year and with utility company subsidies the investment payback period is less than 20 months. Green dividends may also be realized by:

- Reducing power, water and fuel usage.
- Reducing waste costs and collecting on your recycled materials.
- Using less consumables and throwaway items.
- Finding manufacturing efficiencies.
- Improving package design.



## A COMMON SENSE APPROACH

Doing the right thing is not rocket science. Our approach was not to over-complicate any part of the program, but use common sense and ask ourselves:

- Will people understand and comply?
- Will it really make a difference, or is it just for show?
- Is there a process or resource already in place, or do we have to reinvent the wheel?
- What resources are available?
- Can we do it without breaking the bank?

## GETTING STARTED

### SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

We recommend that you form a Green or Sustainability Committee for the purpose of planning, documenting and implementing your program. It was easy to find associates in our company that were willing to volunteer and participate in this worthwhile effort. The group should be composed of a representative sampling of associates from various departments and include hourly, supervisor and management staff. A copy of the announcement used in forming our Green Committee is attached and can be used as a starting point in establishing your own committee.

[http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest\\_Going\\_Green.pdf](http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest_Going_Green.pdf)

### ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

One of the first tasks of the Green Committee will be to create a Company Environmental Statement which will become the guideline for future environmental decisions. We created a short "Core Values" version and then developed it further from there. We have attached a copy for your reference.

[http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest\\_Environmental\\_Commitment.pdf](http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest_Environmental_Commitment.pdf)

### MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND BUY-IN

Once your Green Committee has planned and implemented your basic program, you will want to communicate your plans to your organizations associates and explain their roles. We held a company meeting and the members of our Green Committee introduced the program to our associates. We've attached a copy of the agenda for your reference.

[http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest\\_Green\\_Meeting.pdf](http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest_Green_Meeting.pdf)

## TAKING ACTION STEPS

### BASIC RECYCLING PROGRAM

Much of what ends up in the garbage container can and should be recycled.

In order for a recycling program to be successful, it is important to provide your associates with the following:

- A company driven environmental policy and commitment.
- A clear definition of what is recyclable i.e. pizza box, plastic bags, packing peanuts, toner cartridges, etc
- Conveniently located and clearly identified recycling containers.

Most waste management companies and recyclers offer single-stream or mixed recycling programs that allow you to combine paper, plastics, glass and metals in a single container. This is an easy way to start your program and to make a significant difference. Contact your waste management company for specific details on what and how to recycle. We have included links to some of the major companies in the area for your convenience.

<http://www.rabanco.com/>

<http://www.wmnorthwest.com/seattle/comrecycling.html>

[http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Recycling/Recycle\\_at\\_Your\\_Business/](http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Recycling/Recycle_at_Your_Business/)

### COMPREHENSIVE RECYCLING PROGRAM

Our Green Committee made the decision to implement a comprehensive recycling program with the immediate goal of recycling 90% of our waste stream. Once the program was in place, our associates found it easy to become active participants in our recycling process. We have more information and resources available for your convenience at the following link. [http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest\\_Green\\_Comprehensive\\_Recycle.pdf](http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest_Green_Comprehensive_Recycle.pdf)

### REDUCE AND REUSE

We have all enjoyed the availability and convenience of consumer and packaged goods. This gives us an opportunity to find many small ways to make a big impact by reducing what we use and reusing everything we can. This not only makes environmental sense, it also saves money. The following is a list of some ways we considered reducing and reusing:

- Avoid buying disposable or throwaway products – this applies to everything from electronics to office supplies.
- Buy products capable of being upgraded to avoid or delay obsolescence.
- Repair when possible instead of replacing.
- Copy and print on both sides of paper.
- Avoid printing emails or memos.
- Reuse obsolete, out of date or scrap paper for drafts, faxes or notes.
- Recycle or refill toner and inkjet cartridges.

## GREEN STATS!

- ▶ A Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb (CFL) uses 75% less energy, lasts 10 times as long and costs little up front. ([energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov))
- ▶ The average office worker uses about 10,000 sheets of copy paper per year (U.S. Department of Energy) approximately 100 pounds. If an office with 20 employees switched to 100% PCW (Post Consumer Waste) recycled paper from virgin paper they would:
  - save 10,052 gallons of water
  - save 14 million BTU's
  - save 1120 pounds of solid waste
  - eliminate 2210 pounds of greenhouse gases
- ▶ 93% of Americans believe companies have a responsibility to help preserve the environment. (Cone Consumer Environmental Survey 2007)
- ▶ 91% of Americans say they have a more positive image of a company when it is environmentally responsible. On the flip side 85% indicated they would consider switching to another company's products or services because of a company's negative corporate responsibility practices. (Cone Consumer Environmental Survey 2007)

# GREEN STATS:

- ▶ 68 cents of every dollar spent with a locally owned business stays in our community while only 43 cents of every dollar spent with a non-locally owned business stays in the community. (Institute for Local Self-Reliance)  
That's 25% more money being invested in our community.
- ▶ 80% of discarded paper ends up in a landfill where it decomposes producing the greenhouse gas methane with 21 times the heat-trapping power of carbon dioxide. (Environmental Defense)
- ▶ Nearly 50 leading U.S. and European investors representing more than \$8 trillion of assets met on Feb. 14 at the United Nations to lay out a timetable for their commitments to global climate change and to call on governments and other investors to act with their money as well. (Market Watch February 18, 2008)
- ▶ 47% of U.S. adults say they are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products according to a study commissioned by SCA and conducted by Harris Interactive – April 21, 2008

- Store records electronically to avoid printing hard copies.
- Keep your mailing list up to date to avoid duplication or old information.
- Donate used furniture, equipment and supplies.
- Buy in bulk instead of individually packaged products.
- Use reusable service items such as plates, tableware, glasses and cups.
- Use recyclable shipping containers when appropriate.
- Use rechargeable batteries.

King County also has a great website for identifying companies or groups that accept unwanted items you want to recycle or donate. Be sure to ask if there are any costs involved. Visit: <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/wdidw/>

## PURCHASE GREEN

Money talks, so use your purchasing dollars to encourage manufacturers to offer more ecofriendly products. The following are some areas you can encourage environmental responsibility through your purchasing:

- Support vendors or companies that are environmentally responsible.
- Buy copy paper with a minimum of 30% recycled content. Better yet ask for Harbor 100 FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) Certified with 100% post-consumer recycled content from Gray's Harbor Paper, a local mill.
- Buy office supplies with post-consumer recycled content.
- Use environmentally friendly cleaners and chemicals.
- Purchase solutions in concentrate and use refillable applicators.
- Provide water coolers and cups. Discourage bottled water and sodas.
- Buy in bulk to reduce the amount of packaging per unit.
- Buy recharged or remanufactured toner and inkjet cartridges.
- Purchase Energy Star Certified appliances and equipment.
- Consider remanufactured equipment.
- Consider buying or leasing copiers, printers or faxes that print on both sides of a sheet.
- Consider cloth roll towels or air dryers in restrooms instead of paper towels.
- Purchase paper products such as toilet tissue, paper towels and napkins with post-consumer content.
- Avoid purchasing non-recyclable products such as Styrofoam cups and packing peanuts.
- Avoid purchasing disposable or throwaway products.

## PURCHASE LOCALLY

Purchasing from local companies and vendors can have both environmental and economic benefits.

According to BeTheChange.org:

- Assuming all else is equal - the thing that's produced closest to the place you buy it requires the least amount of transportation to market, therefore incurs the least amount of 'carbon miles', and is therefore better for the climate so buy local!

According to In Business, a magazine for creating sustainable enterprises and communities:

- A survey of eight locally owned businesses in Maine showed that locally owned businesses returned 44.6 percent of their revenue to the surrounding two counties and another 8.7 percent elsewhere around the state. By contrast, a similar survey done for a big box retailer revealed only 14.1 percent of its revenue was returned to the local economy.

## PRINT GREEN

Printed materials are the best way to get your message across to customers and prospects. Many businesses have gone the email and web based advertising route only to discover that the printed word still drives more business than any other medium. Your printed materials are also one of your most visible ways to convey your concern for the environment and your commitment to do the right thing. Here are some of the ways you can make your printing more green:

- Use an FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) Certified printer. For more information go to <http://www.fscus.org/paper/>
- Ask your printer for a copy of their Environmental Policy or Sustainable Printing documentation to insure that you are working with an environmentally sound manufacturer.
- Ask your printer to use vegetable or soy based inks.
- Ask your designer(s) to specify recycled papers, vegetable based ink and to use ecologically sound design principles. There are many on-line resources available to help designers:  
<http://sustainability.aiga.org/>  
<http://www.neenahpaper.com/>  
<http://www.mpm.com>  
<http://www.mohawkpaper.com/>
- Use papers with a high post-consumer recycled content.
- Use FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) Certified papers.
- Use papers from local or domestic mills.
- Consider printing smaller quantities more often on demand to minimize waste due to obsolescence.

# GREEN SPEAK!

### ► **Energy Vampires:**

Appliances that use energy even when you're not using them (or you think you're not using them) such as: cell phone chargers, computers, printers, coffee makers etc...

### ► **Green Dividend:**

The financial savings gained by investing in green or sustainability initiatives.

### ► **Embedded Carbon or Carbon Footprint:**

The total amount of carbon dioxide emitted to get a product to market. Includes the energy required to produce and transport.

### ► **LEED (The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design):**

A green building rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

### ► **Precycling:**

Reducing waste before bringing into office or home by buying in bulk, concentrate or recyclable packaging.

### ► **Carbon Offsets or RECs (Renewable Energy Credits):**

Ways of offsetting your carbon footprint by purchasing credits or offsets to reduce carbon output elsewhere. The industry is still in its infancy and still unregulated. Be careful!

# GREEN SPEAK!

## ► **Cradle to Grave or Cradle to Cradle:**

The lifecycle assessment of a product's environmental impact from manufacturing to waste stream. Cradle to Cradle is a way of looking at product lifecycle with the intention of designing a waste free product.

## ► **PCW (Post Consumer Waste):**

Waste from products that have been through the consumer cycle and returned to be used again. PCW 30% or PCW 100%: Indicates the percentage of post consumer waste used in the manufacturing of a product.

## ► **Compostable:**

Organic matter that decomposes and then is commonly used as fertilizer or soil conditioner. Can include food waste, plant material and food-soiled or non-recyclable paper such as napkins, paper towels and food containers such as pizza boxes etc... May also include other items labeled as biodegradable.

## ► **Sustainable and Sustainability:**

A process that can be maintained at a given level indefinitely. Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (The Brundtland Commission, 1983)

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy efficiency is not only good for the environment it's also good for the bottom line. There are energy improvement incentives available for everything from new construction to retrofitting existing buildings to lighting upgrades. Check with your local utility company to see if they offer energy audits or can recommend someone who does. We have included links to the business conservation programs of the major utility companies in the area for your convenience:

<http://www.pse.com/solutions/forbusiness/Pages/Default.aspx>

<http://www.snopud.com/energy/business.ashx?p=1790>

<http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/light/conserves/business/>

Here are some energy saving tips:

- Establish a company Energy Policy that identifies energy saving practices. We have included a link to ours:  
[http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest\\_Energy\\_Conservation\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.printwest.net/environment/PrintWest_Energy_Conservation_Policy.pdf)
- Buy Energy Star Certified appliances and equipment.
- Replace energy "hog" equipment or appliances with more energy efficient models.
- Turn your water heater down to 115 - 120 degrees.
- Use natural lighting whenever possible.
- Install energy efficient lighting fixtures and/or bulbs.
- Install programmable thermostats and timers.
- Consider expanding your heating and cooling comfort ranges by 2 degrees.
- Install occupancy sensors in areas where people come and go.
- Install timers or sensors on outside lighting and signage.
- Turn off non-essential equipment and lights.
- Ask employees to turn off electronics in their area as they leave daily.
- Keep equipment in good working order to maintain peak efficiency.
- Service heating and cooling units regularly. Replace filters.
- Ensure your weather stripping is good condition.
- If you have outside doors that are opened regularly consider "strip curtains" to keep outside weather out.

## WATER EFFICIENCY

Sometimes it's hard to remember that even in the Seattle area it's important to manage our water resources. By reducing your water usage you are saving twice, first by lowering your water bill second by lowering your sewer bill. Here are some places to look for improving water efficiency:

- Check for water leaks on all your fixtures and repair them.
- Install water-efficient fixtures or low flow aerators.
- Retrofit toilets with low-flow pressurized systems.
- Consider auto flow or flush fixtures that turn off automatically.
- Consider low maintenance or water efficient landscaping.
- Use drip irrigation.

The following website was also very helpful to us in finding ways to reduce and conserve water: <http://www.savingwater.org/index.htm>

## COMMUTING, DELIVERIES AND TRAVEL

Transportation is one of the largest contributors to environmentally harmful greenhouse gases. Here are some areas to look at:

- Encourage the use of mass transit, carpooling, walking or biking.
- Consider rewarding the use of mass transit, carpooling, walking, biking or even subsidizing the purchase of hybrid, alternate fuel or gas efficient vehicles with money from your “Green Dividend”.
- Provide the environment and support systems for telecommuting.
- Consider offering employees alternate work schedules, such as 4 - ten hour work days, or 9 - nine hours work days with every other Friday off.
- Consider hybrid or alternate fuel options for company vehicles.
- Perform regular maintenance on company owned vehicles to ensure peak efficiency and performance.
- Mail or use a courier service to ship locally where cost effective.
- Distribute meeting materials electronically.
- Teleconference or Videoconference where possible.
- When travel is necessary consider renting alternate fuel vehicles.

## DESIGN WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND

In 1987, the World Commission on the Environment and Development defined sustainability as “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

We acknowledge and support this statement in its global sense, and have incorporated this attitude and commitment into our business. With this in mind we developed the following commitment:

“The printing industry relies heavily on the planet’s limited and invaluable resources. PRINTWEST recognizes that our industry can have a huge impact in either helping to create a sustainable industry that preserves the globe for future generations or does much harm to the environment. PRINTWEST will use sound environmental practices in all processes. We will inform our clients of ways they can be more environmentally conscious, and assist them in implementing positive change.”

“Every decision we make as a business has consequences. From the forests that provide the pulp used to make paper, to the oceans, skies and roads that transport our goods, to the rivers and lakes near the paper mills producing paper, to the air that our associates breathe, and to all the varieties of energy sources chosen to produce and transport our printed materials, our decisions matter. PRINTWEST will consider the environmental impact of every business decision we make.”

# GREEN SPEAK:

### ► **FSC (Forest Stewardship Council):**

A non profit organization that sets high standards for the environmental, social, and economic management of the world’s forests. FSC Certified products or vendors must meet or exceed these standards.

### ► **CoC (Chain-of-Custody):**

CoC Certification assures consumers that the wood product (including paper) they buy comes from certified forests and has been handled at all points by an FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified member.

### ► **The 3 Rs (now the 4 Rs):**

Traditional designations or waste reduction, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle but now include “Re-think” or looking at ways of design that can reduce the amount of waste created in producing and delivering products.

### ► **Waste Hierarchy:**

Looking at waste minimization by identifying the most favorable option down to the least favorable. Often depicted as a pyramid.



**YOUR IDEAS OR SUGGESTIONS  
ARE APPRECIATED**

We welcome any comments or suggestions that will make this document more beneficial to other businesses. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at:



Sustainability Committee - Green Assist Program  
[www.printwest.net/greenassist](http://www.printwest.net/greenassist)

