

Doing Your Bit at Work

Cut Down Waste and Buy Recycled

The best way you can make an impact at work is to make sure you understand and use any office or site recycling schemes. If there are none, find out who is responsible for waste at your office or site and ask why.

Try to consider ways you can reduce your own personal waste and re-use things before you think about recycling. Paper use is a good example of an area where you can reduce and reuse:

- If your printer or photocopier has the function available, set it up to print on both sides of the paper.
- Ask if it is possible to set up a paper tray on your printer and photocopier for drafts using the blank side of misprints that would normally be thrown away.
- Try to email documents rather than printing them off.
- Only print off pages that are necessary from documents and reports.
- Put up memos in central communal areas rather than distributing copies to all staff.
- Save documents on disk or email them rather than printing off copies to take home.

Ask if your organisation subscribes to the Mayor's Green Procurement Code, which promotes recycled office stationary products and IT consumables. Visit the London Remade Website for more information on the Code: www.londonremade.com/london_remade/green_procurement.asp

Suggest your organisation donates any unwanted office equipment and furniture rather than throwing it away. Green-works will collect such items and pass them onto local community groups and charities. Visit www.green-work.co.uk to find out how your business can get involved. In Kind Direct also collects certain newly manufactured goods for charity. Visit www.inkinddirect.org.uk to find out what they will take.

If your company is involved in manufacturing, find out whether it could advertise any left over waste materials in a waste exchange. Waste exchanges allow companies to match their waste, defective or surplus materials with the resource needs of other companies. Visit Wastechange www.wastechange.com for more information.

Save Energy

Switch off computers and any non-essential electrical equipment at night or before going home and over weekends. Make sure you know your company's policy before switching off any shared equipment.

Go for 'Green' Commuting

Find out if your employer has a Green Transport Plan that encourages staff to use their cars less to travel into work. Such plans might include:

- The provision of extra facilities for staff who cycle to work such as dry and safe storage for their bikes and shower and changing rooms.
- An interest free loan for staff to purchase a bicycle or season tickets on public transport.
- Flexi-time working arrangements and allowing staff to work from home where possible.
- A staff car-pooling scheme.
- A public transport policy for company business trips.
- Increased salary alternative to a company car.

'An Employers Guide to Green Commuting' is available from Transport 2000 www.transport2000.org.uk

Set up a bicycle user group at work and encourage your company to consider cycling issues in your workplace and to think about joining the London Cycling Campaign as a corporate member. Visit www.lcc.org.uk for a list of corporate membership benefits.

Understand Your Company's Performance

Is your company winning the environmental challenge? If so, encourage them to enter the annual City of London Liveable Cities awards which aims to recognise companies leading the way in sustainable business practice. For more information about the awards and how to register call 0207 332 3598 or visit: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/living_environment/sustainability/liveable_city_awards.htm

Find out if your company has implemented an environmental management system (EMS) such as ISO 14001 www.iso.ch or Eco-management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) www.emas.org.uk. An EMS helps to identify opportunities to reduce material consumption and waste and continually improve environmental performance. Find out what you can do to help meet your organisation's environmental targets.

Check if your company is listed in the FTSE4GOOD or Business in the Environment's Corporate Environmental Engagement Indices which track business performance on corporate social responsibility and environmental issues. Visit www.ftse4good.com or www.bitc.org.uk/bie_index to find out more.

About London Sustainability Exchange

London Sustainability Exchange works to ensure that London has the motivation, knowledge and services needed to build a sustainable society, locally and globally. Visit our website www.lsx.org.uk to find out more information.

Do you have any ideas and suggestions for practical actions people could take to improve their environmental impact at home and work? If so contact us and let us know on 0207 324 3650 or email info@lsx.org.uk

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