

Fact Sheet



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY • ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE DIVISION • 1-800-662-9278

Conservation Tips for Businesses

This list of Conservation Tips for Businesses will help you reduce waste, improve your product and enhance your public image. Some tips are as simple as printing reports on both sides of the paper. Others are more fundamental, such as stimulating a company-wide attitude change toward waste.

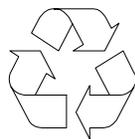
WASTE CONSERVATION TIPS



Assess your waste. Waste reduction begins with a thorough waste assessment. Determine the nature of your waste - quantity, types, hazards, collection and disposal costs - before you begin targeting specific types of waste outputs for reduction.

Source reduction. Take measures to prevent waste at the source. Target materials for reduction if they appear in your waste stream in significant quantities, if they have a low product to package ratio and if they are likely to have a negative impact on the environment.

Recycle. Office paper, old corrugated containers (OCC or cardboard), plastic, foam, aluminum, scrap ferrous metals, oil, glass and many other products can be recycled.



Materials exchange. One company's waste is another's treasure. Investigate established material exchange services or set up your own communications network with other businesses in your region.

Mend and repair. Repair broken machinery and appliances to extend their useful life and reduce disposal costs.

Purchase products and equipment that last. Spend a little extra money on high quality products. It will lower repair bills, increase product life and save money in the long run.

Procure recycled products. Support recycling markets by purchasing products containing recycled materials, such as paper, steel, rubber, aluminum, plastic, oil, compost, etc.

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



Eliminate wasteful packaging. Buy materials in bulk (unpackaged rather than packaged goods). Purchase only the quantity needed, reducing the need to throw away outdated stock.

Recycle laser printer toner cartridges and copier machine developer.



Use reusable products. Provide employees with a ceramic company coffee mug to replace disposable cups. In restaurants, put condiments in reusable containers and use reusable placemats and tablecloths.

Switching to reusables may add to dishwashing and laundry costs but saves on purchase of paper goods, avoids waste disposal costs and will improve your dining atmosphere.

Reduce container waste. Purchase goods in recyclable, reusable or returnable containers.

Turn scrap paper into scratch pads.

Use routing slips, bulletin boards, voicemail or electronic mail instead of making multiple copies of reports.

Use two-sided copying to conserve paper purchase costs, reduce disposal costs and cut postage.

Avoid junk mail. Ask to be removed from junk mailing lists. Write to:

DMA MAIL PREFERENCE SERVICE
PO BOX 9008
FARMINGDALE NY 11735-9008

For those organizations and magazines from whom you do wish to receive mail, request they don't share your address with others. Ask your

post office for a form to remove names of employees from third-class mailing lists. For multiple mailings from the same organization, ask to just get one mailing and route it.

Reduce packaging waste. Ask suppliers to reduce unnecessary packaging. Donate foam packing "peanuts" to mailing services, packaging stores, etc.

Educate employees. Regular reinforcement and support about cost-saving recycling and waste reduction opportunities will pay off in increased efficiency, participation rates and employee suggestions.

Contribute discards that may be usable by others - from toys to clothing to "irregulars" to day-old bakery items.



Appoint a waste reduction coordinator. Assign responsibility for waste reduction activities to a management-level employee for staff questions and ideas.

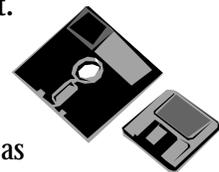
Sell or donate office equipment and supplies that have become obsolete. Old paper stock and equipment can be given to schools, community groups and nonprofit organizations.

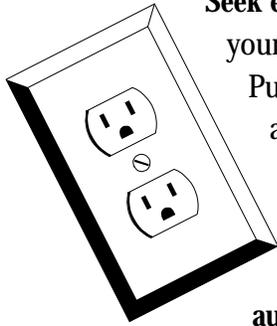
Substitute nonhazardous for hazardous materials wherever possible in the production process. By reducing the amount of hazardous material on the premises, you reduce regulatory concerns involving worker safety, storage, handling and disposal.

Recover and reuse spent solvents.

Keep your mailing list current.

Use computer disks when feasible to store documents. This reduces paper use as well as storage space.

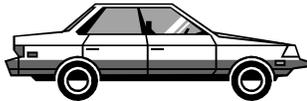




Seek energy advice. Contact your local utility or the Public Service Commission about energy conservation tips or on-site energy audits.

Maintain company automotive fleets.

Consider fuel efficient vehicles sized to do the job; tune-up every 5,000-10,000 miles; adjust brakes; use unleaded gas; use high-quality, multi-grade re-refined oil; use retreaded tires; check tire pressure at least once a week; require reclaiming of CFCs when air-conditioning is repaired or serviced (it's the law.) Avoid optional equipment that decreases fuel economy. Train and reward employees for fuel efficient driving practices.



Use energy efficient lightbulbs.
Don't forget the exit signs!

Use solar energy when possible.

Buy energy efficient electric appliances.

Plant windbreaks and shade trees around your business for energy savings.

Encourage employee car pools.

Support community plans for mass transit and bike paths.

Keep garage and warehouse doors closed when possible to reduce heat/air conditioning loss.

Locate and close unnecessary building openings.

Develop conservation attitudes and awareness among employees. Offer training, apply motivational techniques and encourage suggestions.

Insulate water heaters and keep them at the lowest feasible setting. The minimum setting needs to be 130 or higher to inhibit bacterial growth.

Use a programmable thermostat.

GENERAL CONSERVATION TIPS

Although many products no longer use CFCs as a propellant or foaming agent, **check the label** to be sure.

Use nontoxic, biodegradable soaps and detergents.

Keep hazardous chemicals in spill-proof containers.

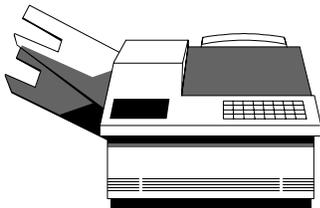
Network. Encourage local Chambers of Commerce, solid waste planning agencies, utilities, municipal governments, trade associations, and nonprofit organizations to work together to provide technical assistance in the areas of waste minimization, energy conservation and advocacy.

Evaluate operating procedures to reduce product consumption or provide environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Support hazardous waste collection programs for very small quantity generators and community residents.

Buy locally. Supporting locally produced goods and food avoids the need for protective packaging and costly transportation.

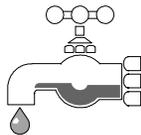
Patronize businesses that use recycled and other environmentally-friendly materials.



Share equipment. Copiers, mailing machines and other office equipment could be shared under a cooperative

purchasing arrangement and joint service agreement.

Conserve water. Turn off water taps when not in active use. Repair dripping faucets.



Install water-efficient faucets, shower heads and toilets to conserve water.

Plant native flora adapted to the local climate that will require less maintenance, water and chemicals.

Investigate composting alternatives for food and yard waste.

Repair small appliances. Support repair training programs in local schools, community colleges and adult education programs.

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Remanufacture. Buy remanufactured goods such as automotive parts, industrial equipment, furniture and other commercial products. Become a remanufacturer yourself!



This list of conservation tips is far from all-inclusive.

As you start thinking about ways to conserve, you and your employees will generate more ideas. Your success will result in a cleaner environment and healthier bottom line!