

# 20 Greening Tips for Employers

Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council

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- 1** Install energy-efficient lighting. Compact fluorescent light bulbs produce less heat than traditional incandescent bulbs and save energy.
- 2** Establish recycling centers around the office to collect and recycle batteries, cans, paper, plastic, glass, toner cartridges, newspapers, cardboard and other materials.
- 3** Use video and teleconferences for meetings to reduce travel time and excess commuting.
- 4** Offer employees reimbursement or incentives for use of public transit. Install a bike rack, organize office carpools and reduce parking pricing for carpoolers.
- 5** Look for products that have environmentally friendly certifications, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR or the Green Seal logos. Learn more about the U.S. EPA Green Procurement Guidelines at [www.epa.gov/cpg](http://www.epa.gov/cpg).
- 6** Whenever possible, distribute documents electronically rather than by hard copy. Create electronic telephone directories for employees and recycle old phonebooks.
- 7** Encourage staff to share and circulate publications rather than printing copies for everyone.
- 8** Set all office printers to double-sided printing as a default.
- 9** Include a clause in your office purchasing policy that requires buying products that contain recycled content and those that can easily be recycled. Also include a clause preventing the purchase of products that contain harmful substances, such as CFCs, arsenic, or lead.
- 10** Conduct an energy audit of your business and implement the recommendations.
- 11** Rent office items that are used infrequently. Let suppliers know that you would like to green your office by purchasing environmentally friendly products.
- 12** Reward employees who make extra efforts to help “green” your business and use these measures as benchmarks against which to compare future resource use.
- 13** Sell or donate old furniture and equipment to other businesses or charitable organizations.
- 14** Buy carpets, furniture, and other interior furnishing made of recycled products and materials that are toxin-free and grown without the use of toxic pesticides and fertilizers.
- 15** Purchase toner cartridges from manufacturers that have exchange or recycling programs so that they can be recycled. Obtain an agreement from manufacturers that they will take back and recycle the appliances your office purchases at the end of their lifecycles.
- 16** If practical, use wood that has been certified sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for wood flooring, furniture, and other products.
- 17** Use paints that are non-toxic and environmentally friendly.
- 18** Shred and use as packaging material any non-recyclable paper.
- 19** Avoid designing newsletters and publications with large margins and large blocks of ink.
- 20** Use vegetable-based inks rather than those made from non-renewable, petroleum-based products, and consider purchasing ink-jet printers, which use 90% less energy.