

# Green Your Office



Campus Operations,  
Growing Sustainability

"The question is not 'Do you make a difference?' You already do make a difference- it's a matter of what kind of difference you want to make during your life on this planet" -Julia Butterfly Hill

"Never doubt that a group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." -Margaret Mead

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# Paper

## Why does paper matter?

The average office employee uses 10,000 sheets of copy paper per year, and the U.S. uses nearly 3.7 million tons annually. Paper makes up almost 40% of our garbage.

Each ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, 7000 gallons of water, 4000 kilowatt hours of energy, and three cubic yards of landfill space.

It takes 90 years to grow the trees used to make one box of tissue made with virgin paper.

Reduce BEFORE you recycle- If the United States cut office paper use by just 10% it would prevent the emission of 1.6 million tons of greenhouse gases -- the equivalent of taking 280,000 cars off the road.

Penn State University research showed that the University could save 72 acres of forest and over \$120,000/year by reducing the default margin settings across campus

## What to do?

Print double sided and reduce margins

Replace hard copy memos, mailings, and newsletters with digital/electronic versions. Cancel your subscriptions to newsletters that you can sign up for online.

Use paper with something printed on one side as draft and scratch paper. Purchase copy paper with 100% recycled content.

Recycle paper you use in the office. Call Campus Recycling at 6-5275 for information on what can be recycled here on campus, or to get an office recycle unit if you don't have one already.

# Meetings

## Why do meetings matter?

Most paper cups are manufactured using 100% bleached virgin paperboard. The chemicals, water, and energy needed to produce them all increase their toll on the environment. The same is true for paper plates.

When they decompose in landfills they produce methane, which traps 23 times the heat of carbon dioxide.

Food is often overlooked- the produce in the average grocery travels nearly 1,500 miles between the farm and your refrigerator and about 40% of our fruit is grown overseas. Beyond transportation, fossil fuels are used in food production: 1/3 fossil fuels used in the US go to raising animals for consumption and a diet heavy in meat uses 20 times more land and 14 times more water than one free of animal products.

The methane produced by decomposing paper and raising animals has a net life in the atmosphere of 8.4 years, compared to carbon's 200-300 years. This means reducing methane has a more immediate impact on slowing global warming.

## What to do?

Reduce overall office paper use- use double-sided handouts and electronic-only versions as much as possible.

Order water in reusable pitchers, rather than disposable bottles and get reusable dishes instead of paper plates and cups.

UO Catering is incorporating more sustainable options- you can make requests for foods that local and/or organic.

Use napkins with a high recycled paper content. Compost them with any food waste to reduce what's going into the landfill.

If you're traveling to a conference or a meeting off-campus, walk or ride your bike if it's close. Use public transportation and car-pool for longer trips.

# Energy

## Why does energy matter?

In Eugene alone, 7,017 CFL bulbs have been purchased since January 1, 2007. The energy saved would have cost \$142,077 and is the equivalent of 9 cars. They saved 129,454 lbs of coal and prevented 554,062 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> from being released.

20% of energy use in the office is through office equipment.

The average desktop computer consumes 60-250 watts of energy per hour. Having a computer turned on for four hours a day and shutting it off the remaining time would reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 83%.

Setting your thermostat one degree lower in the winter and higher in the summer can save 2925 metric tons of greenhouse gases, 6,500 lbs of coal and \$225,000 annually.

## What to do?

Buy energy efficient CFL light bulbs

Turn your computer, printers, and other electric appliances when they're not in use. Using a power strip makes it easier to turn off all appliances at once.

If you're going to be out of the office for a long time, consider unplugging them. Appliances continue to use power when still plugged in.

# Water

## Why does water matter?

It takes about one quarter of a bottle's capacity worth of oil and five litres of water to make one water bottle that size.

Americans spent \$16 billion on water bottles in 2007.

A typical bathroom sink uses 11 gallons/minute. Leaking faucets waste large quantities of water.

## What to do?

Use reusable, rather than disposable, water bottles.

Report leaking faucets to Facilities Services at 346-2319. It's estimated that fixing leaks can save 600 gallons a month.

# Purchasing

## Why does purchasing matter?

Purchasing products made from recycled, post-consumer materials provides and encourages the market that makes recycling work!

Through green purchasing, you're supporting sustainable businesses- rather than those with harmful environmental practices.

## What to do?

Find out about making green purchases and consider each item that comes into your office.

Make sure paper has a high level of recycled content.

If your purchasing orders are made by someone else within, or outside of, your office, make sure they know you want your items to be sustainable. If a supplier doesn't fit your sustainability goals, consider switching to a new supplier.

# Office Furniture and Supplies

## Why does furniture and supplies matter?

Reusing furniture and exchanging office supplies saves resources and space in landfills.

It also saves money by providing free or inexpensive products to others on campus.

## What to do?

Pick up free, used or surplus office items at the Reusable Office Supply Exchange, located in 182 PLC (get keys from the English department office on the 1st floor PLC). Bring in your old items instead of throwing them away!

Check out the Surplus Furniture Exchange Program: <http://surplus.uoregon.edu> This program also includes non-furniture items used on campus- including lab equipment, computers and electronics, survey tools and athletic equipment.

# Electronics

## Why do electronics matter?

In 2007, only 18% of computer products were recycled and 112,000 computers were discarded per day.

According to the EPA, nearly two million tons of used electronics, computers, cell phones, TVs, computer monitors, etc. are disposed of each year, 85% of which end up in landfills.

Electronic items contain heavy metals, semimetals and chemicals, like lead, mercury, arsenic and flame-retardants. These are all toxic and can pollute the air and water when not disposed of properly.

Many of the metals in electronics are salvagable when recycled.

## What to do?

Dispose of electronics properly at:

Glenwood Central Receiving Station takes computer monitors, computers and televisions.  
3100 E 17th Ave. 682-4120.

Nextstep Recycling takes cell phones, computers (for donations or recycling), electronics, telephones and office machines.  
2101 W 10th Ave. 686-2366.

Buy rechargeable batteries to avoid battery waste, they last an average of 3 years- about 1000 charges.

# Policies

Get to know the UO's policies! These have been put in place to ensure the University follows its sustainability goals.

UO Comprehensive Environmental Policy:

[http://www.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Pol\\_Compre.htm](http://www.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Pol_Compre.htm)

UO Paper Policy

[http://www.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Pol\\_Recpaper.htm](http://www.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Pol_Recpaper.htm)

# Green Office Checklist

Do you ...

- carpool, walk, bike or use LTD to get to work?
- bring your reusable beverage container to work?
- reduce printed materials and print two-sided with reduced margins when necessary?
- check the recycled content level of your paper?
- order sustainable snacks for your meeting?
- replace light bulbs with CFL bulbs?
- disable your screensaver and set the computer to sleep when not used?
- unplug rarely used office equipment?
- report problems with leaky faucets and thermostats to Facilities Services?
- turn off lights, computers and other electronics before leaving the office?
- recycle paper in your desk-side 3-tiered box?
- recycle corrugated cardboard at the nearest cardboard site?
- recycle bottles and cans in the appropriate place?
- compost food waste?
- recycle ink cartridges?
- recycle e-waste correctly, contacting the appropriate places?

## Contacts and Resources

Campus Recycling- for questions about recycling on campus: <a href="http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Material.htm">http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Material.htm</a>	346-1545
Facilities Services- for leaky faucets or problems with thermostats:	346-2319
Next Step Recycling- for recycling electronics, telephones, etc:	686-2366
BRING Recycling- has a Reuse Warehouse:	746-3023
UO Catering- takes requests for all organic and all local food: <a href="http://catering.uoregon.edu/sustainability.php">http://catering.uoregon.edu/sustainability.php</a>	346-4303