



## **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (December 2010)**

### **The Business Mission:**

It is the company's intention to implement some basics in terms of an 'Environmental Policy' in order to show some commitment in minimizing our environmental impact on this planet, for the sakes of some responsibility and management.

### **Commitments:**

The recording of such will form part of our corporate governance and will therefore become a 'live document', from which we can then strive to further improve upon against time, with performance and results.

### **Recognition:**

We recognize and endeavour to;  
Educate AND train staff with the environmental intentions of the company,  
environmental issues and the environmental effects of their activities.  
Comply with relevant environmental legislation as a minimum level of performance.

### **Relevant Areas of Review:**

- Transport
- Minimising Waste
- Re-use of 'grey' materials
- Recycling
- Efficient use of water and energy
- Use of bio-degradable chemicals
- Minimising use of solvents and lead-based products
- Sourcing of environmental friendly products/suppliers

## **Use paper efficiently in your office**

It's estimated that half of all office waste is paper-based, so the benefits to your business of reducing this are clear. It is relatively straightforward and inexpensive to cut the amount of money you spend on buying and disposing of paper.

### **Reduce paper waste**

The cheapest option, and the best for the environment, is to reduce the amount of paper waste that your business produces. For example, you could:

- Ensure that all photocopying and printing are produced in double-sided format on recycled paper. Question whether you need to produce copies at all.
- Cancel junk mail and unwanted publications.
- Avoid overproducing marketing and publicity material by reviewing distribution lists and regularly updating databases.
- Use electronic communications where possible to reduce printing and faxing. Ensure that your staff are comfortable with new equipment and provide training where necessary. Encourage them not to print out emails unless necessary.
- Ensure fax machines are set so they do not produce unwanted header or report sheets.
- Reduce confidential waste costs by ensuring that the non-confidential paper collection is secure and give clear instructions to staff as to which material is strictly confidential.

### **Reuse and recycle paper**

Where you can't avoid producing waste paper, try to reuse it. For example, you could use paper printed on one side as scrap paper or message pads. You could also reuse envelopes - eg for internal use - and donate surplus card and paper to local schools or nurseries.

To ensure that paper is recycled you should:

- Place paper recycling bins in all offices. A good guide is one bin between six staff and one next to each photocopier and printer. Use paper ream lids as additional desktop collection trays.
- Ensure that cleaning staff support the recycling scheme and that emptying the recycling bins is part of their contracted work.
- Promote the scheme to staff by putting up posters around the offices and on bins explaining the types of paper that can be recycled.
- Provide staff with ongoing feedback about the scheme, including figures on the amount of paper collected. Suggest making a donation to charity or planting a tree when targets are met.

### **Choice of paper**

You should use as little new paper as possible because the environmental impacts of producing paper are considerable. Buy 100 per cent recycled or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-accredited paper wherever possible.

## **Use resources efficiently in your office**

### **Reduce waste from your office**

Waste is expensive, and not just in terms of the cost of the product being thrown away or the cost of disposal. Waste involves the loss of costly and scarce resources such as energy and water, consumables and materials which might not be recovered, and wasted labour and effort. As a result, the real cost of waste can be several times higher than the cost of disposal. Cutting your office's waste production can improve your profitability, as well as reducing your environmental impact.

Reducing waste in the office is relatively straightforward with the right policies in place. These policies usually involve either a change in behaviour, or a change in the equipment used to do the work.

#### **Behavioural changes**

Changing the attitudes of office workers towards the creation of waste in the first place can have a major impact on waste production. Eliminating waste by working more carefully, making fewer errors, or simply considering whether or not to print a document can cut down paper use considerably.

Switching off lights and equipment when leaving the office, making sure that taps are turned off and cutting down on heating and air conditioning can all reduce waste of scarce and expensive resources. Introducing a positive attitude towards reuse and recycling of materials can have similar benefits.

#### **Equipment changes**

Some waste reduction requires you to invest in new equipment, which may need to wait until the time is right. Office printers and copiers that print to both sides of a sheet of paper can make a considerable difference to paper use, while the latest computer monitors use much less energy than earlier models. When choosing new equipment, consider their environmental credentials as part of the specification process.

### **Recycle your office waste**

Although recycling office waste such as paper is far better than sending it for disposal to landfill, you should bear in mind that recycling itself has environmental impacts and costs for transportation and energy use. You should look first to waste elimination or reduction, or reuse of materials, because this will cut your purchase and disposal costs. Only consider recycling when these other options have been considered.

You can improve office recycling policy by:

- taking into consideration whether the things you buy for the office - materials, consumables, equipment, components, etc - are made from recycled materials and whether they themselves can be easily recycled
- ensuring that purchases are packed (where packaging is necessary) in recycled or recyclable materials
- benchmarking current recycling activities and looking at ways to do it better

- establishing an action plan to improve recycling
- monitoring performance
- making recycling bins at least as accessible as bins for waste going to landfill

It's helpful to work with suppliers of equipment, materials and consumables so that they understand your business' policy on environmental issues.

### **Cut water use in your office**

Many businesses with offices are unaware of how much water they use, even when they have a meter. However, there are opportunities for substantial reductions in water use, particularly in washrooms, as this accounts for around 65 per cent of water use in the average office.

Reducing water use is relatively easy, and you can achieve many savings at relatively little cost. You can cut down on the amount of water, and associated waste and energy costs by:

- establishing a baseline of what your business is using currently, and highlighting ways to achieve immediate reductions
- considering water efficiency when you buy new equipment
- looking into the costs of automatic-flush systems for toilets, automatic water-delivery systems for wash basins, push-button taps, smaller cisterns, etc - it may be worth replacing older equipment to achieve cost savings in the longer term
- monitoring the system for leaks or for dripping taps

### **Make your office more energy efficient**

Energy use represents one of the biggest opportunities to reduce costs and environmental impacts in most offices. In fact, with good practice you may find it possible to reduce your energy costs by half.

The government has committed to making significant reductions in carbon dioxide emissions and this will impact on every business. You may already have to comply with legal requirements that aim to reduce the energy used by commercial buildings. You should compare energy tariffs from different suppliers and check whether you can change to a more competitive rate. However, to achieve longer-term benefits you should cut energy use rather than just buying at lower prices.

Straightforward policies such as switching off lights, computer monitors and other energy-consuming equipment when they are not in use will have a substantial and rapid impact. Check insulation and draft-exclusion systems, and switch to more energy-efficient heating and lighting systems where appropriate. Introduce a policy of using daylight wherever possible and switch to energy-efficient lighting.

You can make energy efficiency measures effective by encouraging and giving staff incentives to change established behaviour patterns.

When you buy new equipment you should look at its energy requirements, and take this into account when looking at the total cost of ownership. Think about how the heat production of new equipment might affect air-conditioning requirements, which can be expensive. Make sure that all equipment is properly maintained and operates at peak efficiency.

### **Cut transport costs for your office**

The financial and environmental costs of transport are increasing. However, using a travel plan can help you to reduce these. A travel plan is a package of initiatives to reduce car use and improve efficiency, including incentives and facilities for staff to use public transport, cycle or walk to work rather than providing more car parking.

An effective travel plan will cut the cost of business travel, reduce car-fleet costs (including lowering maintenance and fuel costs) and cut parking, toll and fuel-tax expenditure.

You can begin the process by establishing your current transport costs, producing a baseline report that shows how much is spent on company car use - including purchase costs, operational costs, parking and maintenance - as well as mileage payments given to people who use their own cars for business journeys. Include expenses paid for staff to use public transport, including loans for season tickets, etc.

With this information, you should be able to see immediate opportunities for making savings - for example, by using trains for inter-city journeys and other forms of public transport for intra-city travel. Look at reducing the amount of business travel by making more use of online conferencing or by combining journeys to increase efficiency.

Other practical issues could include encouraging employees to share transport, incentivising cycle use or walking and - for staff for whom company cars are essential - changing to more fuel-efficient vehicles.

Performance todate:

1) July 2009 – Company profiles printed using `Sappi - Tripple Green E.F. paper

2) April 2010 - Re-Cycling contact details:

Remade Holdings Pty Ltd (Recycling) tel: 087 150 1260

Len Sussens [len@remade.co.za] Wynberg, Sandton.



Set-up contract for weekly collections.

3) April 2010 - Order of 4 suitable wheelie bins for waste management (2 grey (un-recyclable rubbish, and food,waste), 1 white (paper,cardboard), 1 green (glass,cans & plastic)).



- 4) December 2010 – Purchasing of a new delivery vehicle with the previous model being 5 years old and heavy on fuel, this was top of our agenda for the year, helping improve economies on fuel, and improving overall performance.
- 5) December 2010 - Installed an energy saving system, linked to the Distribution Board to control the usage of electricity within the building, for apparatus and geyser use. A system known as P.E.P.P. offering a 25 – 45% saving. For further information contact our office to see how it is performing and what we have actually achieved.



- 6) May 2011 – Internal paper management; halving our use and purchase of paper simply by using `double-sided' printing on the central copier machine. Minutes for the weekly internal meeting are projected onto a screen for discussion and not printed. Estimated saving: 2 reams a month. To be monitored.

## SECTIONAL TITLE USE NOTES:

### **How to recycle to reduce rubbish**

How can we reduce the amount of rubbish our scheme's units produce?

The answer is simple: practice the three Rs.

1. Reduce
2. Reuse
3. Recycle

Specifically POINT 3, we'll define the practical steps you can take to implement a recycling program in your scheme.

#### **Separating your waste**

A good place to start is to encourage all your scheme's occupants to set up three bins in their units: an "organic" bin for the compost heap, a "dry" recyclables bin and a bin for non-recyclable waste. This will help you to sort your waste at the source.

Not everyone in your scheme will be as dedicated to recycling as you may be. It is important to make it as easy as possible for occupants to recycle in order to achieve the best results. If your scheme has a caretaker that takes out the rubbish on "bin day", make sure that all occupants' three bins are left in an easily accessible spot. The caretaker can then place the contents of the three bins in the right place. Namely, the rubbish in the regular bin, the recycling in the separated recycling bins (more on that below), and the organic waste on the compost heap or worm farm (more on that in my next article).

#### **What materials are recyclable, and how should they be separated?**

Below is a general list of materials that can be recycled. However, you must find out what your nearest recycling depot accepts. Do not dump materials at a depot that does not recycle those particular materials – this will make your waste their headache! Bear in mind that recycled materials must be rinsed out before they can be recycled.

#### **Tins and metals**

Metals are used to make new products of the same quality, conserving irreplaceable natural resources. Recycling tins and cans saves about 95% of the energy needed to make a new can from iron ore. There is a huge demand for all steel scrap metals worldwide. [South Africa](#) exports up to 50% of the scrap that it recovers. It does not matter if cans are crushed, rusted or burnt – they can all be recycled.

## **Cardboard and paper**

Cardboard and paper are excellent materials for recycling. For every ton of paper recycled, 17 trees are saved, 40% less energy and 30% less water is needed to make paper.

### **Do not recycle the following cardboard and paper products:**

- Carbon paper
- Dog food bags, potato bags, wax-coated boxes
- Wet or dirty paper (tissues, paper towels, food wrappings, paper with spills)
- Self-adhesive paper (post-it notes)
- Chemically treated fax or photographic paper
- Wax- or plastic-coated packaging for liquids (milk cartons)

## **Plastics**

Plastics generally do not degrade as they are made from petroleum-based chemicals (oil, coal and gas). They can be a problem to recycle because they are often combined with other materials. Plastics are made from different plastic polymers. It is important that similar plastics are recycled together. Find out from your nearest drop-off centre what plastic types they accept. In general, plastics with a recycle logo and identification number (e.g. PET, or No. 1, in the recycle triangle) can be recycled. If you are at all uncertain about which plastics may or may not be recycled, ask at your local drop-off centre.

## **Glass bottles and jars**

Recycling a glass bottle saves enough electricity to light a 100 W bulb for four hours. For every ton of glass recycled, 1,2 tons of raw materials and 114 litres of oil energy are saved. It is important to remove bottle tops and corks from glass bottles and containers. Certain glass products cannot be recycled.

## **Getting the recycling to the local depot**

When your schemes recycling program is in full swing, you may need to drop off the recycling at a local depot once a week. If there are willing members of the body corporate, you could consider taking turns to shuttle the recycling materials to the depot. If not, you should consider hiring a company to pick it up for you