

# Things the DENR Workplace can do to be More Sustainable

**Paper Reduction:** During fiscal year 1999-2000, state agencies spent more than \$24 million on office paper products. To reduce waste, saving the pollution in making extra product, and to cut these costs:

- Print and copy documents on both sides. If only 25 percent of print jobs were double-sided or if drafts were printed on once used, single-sided sheets, we could save the state more than \$6 million per year.
- Set fax machines to print a confirmation sheet only when there is a problem and load the fax machine with once-used, single-sided sheets. Faxing directly from your computer also saves paper because no hard copy is necessary.
- Utilize electronic letterhead to reduce printing costs and avoid the storage of large inventories of letterhead that may become outdated.
- Use e-mail and Web-based communications. The Department of Administration's Division of Purchase and Contract saved more than 900,000 sheets of paper and \$4,500 by initiating an online bidding system.
- Remember that e-mails can be stored in your local folder to avoid printing them and taking up space on the state server (which your agency pays for). Ask your computer support person to help you establish this system on your workstation.
- If you must print e-mails or drafts, do so on sheets that have already been used on one side and discarded for recycling.
- Use the interoffice mail system to send materials to other state offices rather than the U.S. Postal Service. Interoffice envelopes get reused many times, and using this system saves the cost of postage.
- Utilize electronic forms whenever the capability exists.

Visit North Carolina's Waste Wise Web site at:

[www.sustainablenc.org/wastewise/workshop/index.htm](http://www.sustainablenc.org/wastewise/workshop/index.htm) to find additional information on how to reduce paper use in the workplace, including waste assessment handouts and calculations for determining the amount of money saved through paper reduction.

**Purchasing:** As North Carolina's largest employer, state government purchases a tremendous amount of goods and services. Several ways exist to cut costs and conserve resources

When making purchasing decisions:

- Utilize the state term contract system. Items found on state contract have been priced based on bulk prices and are usually cheaper than buying items directly from a non-term contract vendor. Using state term contract also saves time and paper, as you are not required to obtain three quotes as is necessary for non-contract items.
- Buying products made with recycled content supports markets for recycled materials and creates jobs for the local economy. Recycled products of the same quality and availability are often priced lower than their virgin equivalents. To view the recycled products currently available through term contract go to: [www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/recycled.htm](http://www.doa.state.nc.us/PandC/recycled.htm)
- Choose energy efficient (Energy Star compliant) and durable goods whenever possible.

- Consider leasing versus buying office equipment and other large purchases. This avoids large one-time costs and removes the burden of ultimate disposal costs from the state (placing them back on the vendor/producer).
- If you need office furniture or other items, check with DENR, state or federal surplus first. Reusing furniture and other items saves money and resources. Additional information about state surplus can be found at: [www.doa.state.nc.us/doa/ssp/ssp.htm](http://www.doa.state.nc.us/doa/ssp/ssp.htm). Federal Surplus is available online at: [www.doa.state.nc.us/doa/fsp/fsp.htm](http://www.doa.state.nc.us/doa/fsp/fsp.htm).

### **Energy and Resource Usage**

- Turn off computers and other office equipment at night
- Turn of lights in your office building each night
- Turn down thermostats at night and on weekends
- Increase the temperature in the summer and decrease the temperature in the winter to save on heating/air conditioning costs and to decrease energy consumption
- Avoid using the elevators whenever possible

### Sustainable practices for **Purchasing** include:

- Buying supplies and items that are durable, reusable, and recyclable.
- Procuring supplies and items that are non-toxic and made with recycled content.
- Specifying that purchased items be delivered in bulk or with minimal packaging
- Identifying environmentally preferable products that meet all basic quality and performance specifications and making them the only product of their kind available to agency personnel.
- Establishing environmental screening for all new purchases.

### Sustainable practices for **Office Operations** include:

- Reducing paper usage through double-sided copying and printing, use of email, circulating memos, central filing systems, and moving toward a paperless office.
- Ensuring that all computers and other office equipment have the US EPA Energy Star rating.
- Beginning or expanding recycling programs for office discards.
- Buying recycled office supplies, such as reformatted diskettes, remanufactured toner cartridges, and recycled paper.
- Share journals and remove names from mailing lists to reduce junk mail.

### Sustainable practices for **Transportation** include:

- Reducing agency car miles through teleconferencing, trip consolidation, and staff carpooling.
- Making use of train transport for state business whenever possible.
- Encouraging the use of carpooling and mass transit by employees.
- Implementing telecommuting/work-at-home policies, alternative work hours, and other means to reduce employee car miles and travel during peak traffic times.

### Sustainable practices for **Fleet Maintenance /PROCUREMENT** include:

- Procuring alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) that reduce energy use and emissions.

- ♦ Installing by-pass oil filters and other proven technologies that reduce automotive wastes and emissions.
- ♦ Implementing pollution prevention practices in fleet maintenance operations.
- ♦ Setting a goal of increasing overall miles-per-gallon (MPG) performance for fleet(s).
- ♦ Specifying low emissions and high MPG in fleet procurement contracts.

Sustainable practices for **Facility Management/Housekeeping** include:

- ♦ Installing water-saving devices such as low-flow toilets and showerheads.
- ♦ Encouraging water and energy conservation by employees.
- ♦ Maximizing energy efficiency in lighting (Green Lights program) and in heating and cooling buildings (Energy Star Buildings program)
- ♦ Using the least toxic cleaning materials and buying them in bulk.
- ♦ Employing green building techniques in maintenance and renovation practices.

Sustainable practices for **Construction / Development / Leasing** include:

- ♦ Specifying energy and water conservation measures in construction and leasing contracts.
- ♦ Using non-toxic and recycled content products in building projects.
- ♦ Requiring contractors to implement recycling and reuse of construction by-products in all state construction projects.
- ♦ Requiring new state buildings to use energy efficient designs like passive solar heating and day lighting.

The **tried and true formula for environmental excellence** includes:

- ♦ Clearly communicate management commitment to environmental improvement.
- ♦ Employ a team approach established to identify and implement environmentally sound measures.
- ♦ Conduct a comprehensive review of environmental impacts.
- ♦ Establish goals to improve environmental performance.
- ♦ Educate and involve employees.
- ♦ Establish mechanisms to evaluate the effect of implemented practices.
- ♦ Incorporate a loop to re-confirm commitment and to ensure continual improvement.