

# Greening your BUSINESS

Running a business, no matter how big or how small, takes commitment and dedication. And keeping up with new trends that may have an effect on market share is a top priority in order to stay competitive. Operating a business in an environmentally-friendly way is becoming more important because consumers are increasingly making choices based on environmental factors. Incorporating good environmental policies for your business, regardless of its size, may be a wise decision that will reflect on your bottom line. The decision to green your business can prove successful in several ways:

- **Financially:** You can immediately save money
- **Marketing:** You can promote your business as being green
- **Social Responsibility:** You know that you are doing your part



## Green Your Operations

- ✓ Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs
- ✓ Use Energy Star-rated equipment
- ✓ Use non-toxic cleaning supplies
- ✓ Use a programmable thermostat
- ✓ Install high-efficiency WaterSense-certified fixtures
- ✓ Reduce the amount of packaging used for customers' purchases
- ✓ Sell products made from recycled and/or re-sourced materials
- ✓ Buy as much of your merchandise, supplies and services locally
- ✓ Install LED exit signs
- ✓ Offer deliveries on foot or by bicycle within the immediate vicinity
- ✓ If your business uses cars or trucks, switch to hybrid, electric or other vehicles that minimize the use of fossil fuels
- ✓ Recycle toner and inkjet cartridges from computer printers, fax machines and copy machines
- ✓ Recycle any byproducts your business produces
- ✓ Recycle the boxes and packing material that contained merchandise shipped to your business
- ✓ Offer in-store recycling for products you sell
- ✓ Use power strips with on-off switches and turn the entire power strip off when the items plugged into it aren't being used

- ✓ Replace paper towels in employee restrooms with reusable cloth towels
- ✓ Put storefront window display lights on timers instead of leaving lights on all night
- ✓ Use occupancy sensors to activate light fixtures in storage rooms, bathrooms and other rooms and spaces that are vacant for long periods of time
- ✓ Use motion sensors to activate interior and exterior security lights
- ✓ Use double-sided copying to conserve paper
- ✓ Use low-Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints, coatings, adhesives and sealants

## Market Your Green

- ✓ Use your storefront window display to promote sustainability and sustainable uses of your business' products and services
- ✓ Use electronic media – e-mail, phone calls, websites – instead of printed flyers or letters to reach your customers and promote your business
- ✓ Create partnerships with similar businesses to help customers identify products and services closest to their homes
- ✓ Offer a small discount to customers who bring and use their own bags
- ✓ If your community has a “Buy Local First” program, participate in it. If it doesn't have one, help start one

## Improve Your Green

- ✓ Offer in-store workshops on sustainability related to your business. For example, a clothing store might offer a workshop on making messenger bags out of discarded clothing
- ✓ Develop a written environmental vision statement, require your employees to become familiar with it and make it available to your customers
- ✓ Ask your suppliers and service providers to share their sustainability policies with you. If they don't have one, ask that they develop one
- ✓ Provide incentives to encourage employees to commute to work by public transportation, carpooling, biking or walking
- ✓ Provide a secure space where employees can store their bicycles during the workday
- ✓ Provide showers and lockers for employees who bike, run or walk to work
- ✓ Donate unused, nonreturnable items to local non-profit organizations rather than throwing them away
- ✓ If your business has more than one location, use conference calls or web-based video calls to minimize the need to drive to meetings
- ✓ Ask product manufacturers and wholesalers from whom you buy merchandise to reduce the amount of packaging they use for their products