

TEN TIPS TOWARD BETTER SUSTAINABILITY



Whether you're just starting down the path of sustainability or already a superstar, these ten tips will show you how easy it is to accelerate your impact and improve your bottom line with very little investment. These may even spark some new ideas!

1 UNPLUG EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES THAT AREN'T BEING USED

Did you know that even when they are turned off, machines and equipment that are plugged into an outlet continue to use energy? Vampire load costs businesses more than \$3 billion a year. In fact, over time, some appliances like TVs and microwaves, actually consume more electricity during the hours they're not in use than the times you're actually using them. Fight phantom power by pulling the plug on items that are rarely or never used.

2 OPEN THE BLINDS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DAYLIGHTING

Most offices leave all the lights on even when the sun is beaming in. Turn off unnecessary lights and use individual task lights where needed. Research also shows that natural light has beneficial effects on our health and even our mood.

3 CONSIDER SMART MONITORING DEVICES OR WIRELESS THERMOSTATS FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Retrofitting your current pneumatic thermostats with wireless devices can help you better control heating and cooling to save energy. While personal heaters may potentially drive up costs, consider radiant alternatives like heated floor mats for those folks who like things more toasty. Or do like exclusive Murray Circle Restaurant in Sausalito, and provides wool blankets for customers.

4 CONTACT YOUR UTILITY TO SCHEDULE A LOW- OR NO-COST ENERGY AUDIT

Assessing your business' energy use is first step towards saving energy and money. An energy assessment will help you identify and prioritize ways to save energy and money, such as deleting equipment, shifting energy use to off-peak hours, or leveraging renewable energy sources.

5 ANALYZE YOUR WATER BILL TO LOOK FOR UNEXPECTED INCREASES – IT COULD BE A LEAK

Most companies just pay their water bill every month without really understanding where that resource is flowing. Especially in California, where we need to conserve, tracking spikes in your bill, along with a thorough check of irrigation and usage habits can uncover real and immediate savings.

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PROVIDE EMPLOYEES WITH THEIR OWN WATER BOTTLES AND/OR MUGS AND ELIMINATE DISPOSABLE CUPS AND PLASTIC BOTTLES

You'd be surprised how much your office spends on disposables. Rather than recycle those plastic water bottles, let's keep them out of the waste stream altogether. Also consider other disposables that end up in landfill, like plastic coffee stirrers.

7

LABEL RECYCLING CONTAINERS WITH IMAGES OF PROPER MATERIALS THAT GO IN EACH BIN

What goes in which bin is confusing for even the best of us, but your recycling and composting results can be greatly improved by showing people exactly what goes where. Signs and labels need to be visually descriptive in order to change behavior. And be sure to place recycle, compost and landfill bins next to each other, rather than separate locations.

8

GET A FREE LIGHTING ASSESSMENT

A lighting assessment can help you compare energy usage rates and explore more efficient alternatives to your property's existing technologies. And research shows a little attention to office lighting design can go a long way in making a workspace function better, feel more comfortable and invite collaboration among colleagues, helping to create a more productive atmosphere. Many lighting distributors and energy companies offer free assessments.

9

CREATE AN AWARDS PROGRAM FOR THE BEST SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

Engaging employees as much as you can is the most important thing you can do to keep your sustainability program on track and effective. Solicit ideas from employees and stakeholders and provide recognition with badges, certificates, public appreciation, or other incentives. Make sure your Green Team keeps the program alive.

10

CONVERT THOSE PAPER DOCUMENTS TO DIGITAL

It's much cheaper and easier to update and distribute internal documents digitally. Save paper and money by converting your employee handbook to a PDF. Take advantage of online collaboration tools like BaseCamp and Google Docs to create and share without printing. And if you must print, be sure and set your printers to default to double-sided printing.

WANT MORE IDEAS?

We invite you to learn more about how you can begin or continue to accelerate your sustainability efforts and impact. The REV sustainability Circle® Program will help you develop a business case and a 5-year action plan with resource and cost saving initiatives in all areas of sustainability. Contact us to learn more — info@revsustainability.com.