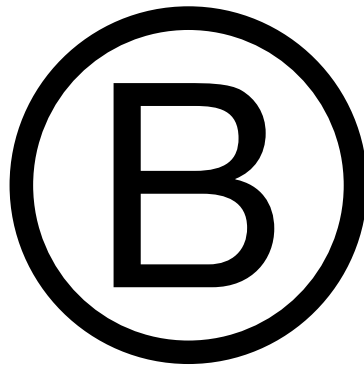


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**B Resource Guide:**

*Reducing Material Usage at the Office*



# B Resource Guide:

## *Reducing Material Usage at the Office*

### What's in this Guide:

- I. Reducing Material Usage at the Office
- II. Checklists for Reducing Paper Usage
- III. Checklist for Reducing Energy Usage
- IV. Checklist for Reducing Equipment Usage
- V. Checklist for Reducing Usage in Building Operations and Maintenance
- VI. Helpful Resources

### I. Reducing Material Usage at the Office

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Businesses generate up to 45 percent of this country's waste, and managing it costs them billions of dollars a year. Reducing material waste at the office is a smart approach to saving money and natural resources. This guide provides detailed checklists and resource links that any business can use to start finding ways to reduce the amount of materials they consume and the costs associated with them. <sup>1</sup>

For a step-by-step guide for implementing a recycling policy and instilling a culture of "reduce, re-use, recycle" within the office, see our **B Resource Guide: How to Implement an Office Material Recycling Program**.

### II. Checklist for Reducing Paper Usage<sup>2</sup>

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- Keep copiers and printers in good repair and make it policy to only buy or lease copiers and printers that will do two-sided copying reliably.
- Set copiers and laser printers so two-sided printing is the default for various types of documents (Word files, email, etc.)
- Reuse paper already printed on one side by manually feeding it into copiers and printers. Use it for internal documents like drafts and short-lived items such as meeting agendas or temporary signs.
- Remind people to double-sided copy by posting reminders near the copiers, using interesting posters or entertaining slogans ("Two sides are better than one," "make a 2 (copies) for 1 (page) offer," "get a second impression," etc.) and changing them often to maintain interest.
- Adopt an organizational policy that all individual documents will be twosided.
- Once-used paper can also be reused in plain paper fax machines — they only need one clean side.
- Use reusable fax cover sheets or fax transmission labels instead of a full cover sheet.
- Use reusable inter- and intra-office envelopes.
- Make use of the back side of waste paper for faxes, or as scratch paper.
- Reduce and double-side standard forms. In its effort to reduce paper, Bank of America saved significant amounts of paper by reducing and consolidating various standard forms.



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- Use e-mail instead of paper for exchanging internal memos and electronic documents. As part of their paper reduction campaign, AT&T switched its vendor billing, employee newsletter, and other documents to electronic mail, saving millions of sheets of paper annually.
- Post announcements on a bulletin board instead of distributing individual copies.
- Maintain a central filing system to eliminate duplication, or store information electronically.
- Proofread documents carefully before printing.
- Keep mailing lists up-to-date to avoid duplication.
- Share materials and circulate single copies of documents, newsletters, newspapers and magazines among employees.
- E-mail can be used to share documents and ideas. Be sure to only print the emails you need to have a hard copy of. This advice goes for Internet documents as well. Instead of printing a Web page, bookmark it or save the page on your hard drive and pull it up when needed.
- Desktop fax, electronic references (CD-ROM databases), electronic data storage, electronic purchasing and direct deposit are all ways to use electronic media that reduce office paper waste.
- Help minimize misprints by posting a diagram on how to load special paper like letterhead so it will be printed correctly.
- Practice efficient copying — use the size reduction feature offered on many copiers. Two pages of a book or periodical can often be copied onto one standard sheet.
- Use two-way or send-and-return envelopes. Your outgoing envelope gets reused for its return trip.
- Reuse old paper for notepads. It can be cut to custom sizes and simply bound with a staple.
- Draft documents can be reviewed, edited and shared on-screen.

### **III. Checklist for Reducing Energy Usage**

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- Purchase or lease computer monitors and office machines with energy-saving automatic shutdown features, such as equipment with the Energy Star® label.
- Turn off computers, copiers, lights and other equipment when not in use, every night, and every weekend. Install occupancy sensors to shut off lights when room is not in use.
- Install an Energy Star-labeled programmable thermostat and locking covers to prevent tampering.
- Set thermostat to 68 degrees F.
- Make sure lighting controllers (time clocks and photocells) are working and properly set.
- Make sure exterior lighting is off in the daytime.
- Turn off and unplug coffee machines, desk lamps and fans.
- In winter, open shades and blinds during daylight hours.
- In summer, close during daylight hours.
- Keep doors and windows closed while HVAC system is running.
- Ensure that doors and windows have tight seals and remain closed.



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- Perform scheduled maintenance on units including cleaning burners and air conditioner coils, replacing and cleaning air filters and checking ducts and pipe insulation for damage.
- Minimize operation of motors associated with HVAC system.
- Exit Signs: Replace incandescent exit lighting with Energy Star LED (Light Emitting Diode) lamps.
- Reduce general overhead lighting by de-lamping and use task lighting where needed.
- Fluorescents: replace incandescent lighting with Energy Star compact fluorescent bulbs.
- Replace chillers, motors in air handling units, hot water heaters, HVAC units, lighting (outdoor or fluorescent).
- Install Energy Management System to control HVAC system - its operating hours, set points, scheduling of chillers, etc.
- Retrofit T12 lamps and ballasts with T8 lamps and electronic ballasts.
- Install insulation in exterior walls, ceilings, and wall cavities.

### **IV. Checklist for Reducing Equipment Usage**

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- Use remanufactured toner cartridges in printers and copiers.
- Refill laser cartridges and re-ink typewriter ribbons.
- Sell or donate your used office furniture and equipment.
- Use non-disposable tableware (mugs, silverware, plates)
- Use cloth towels in kitchens and bathrooms
- Buy reusable filters for coffee machines
- Buy mechanical pencils and refillable pens
- Use reusable envelopes for interoffice mail
- Buy refillable tape dispensers
- Encourage employees to reuse lunch bags
- Use undated, erasable wall calendars
- Reuse envelopes with metal clasps
- Consider purchasing a water cooler to replace individual bottled water
- Encourage the building manager to install reusable air filters in your building's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system
- Encourage suppliers to ship material in reusable containers
- Ship your own office's materials in reusable/reused packaging

### **V. Checklist for Reducing Usage in Building Operations and Maintenance**

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- Purchase cleaning solutions in concentrate and use refillable applicators.
- Use metered dispensing systems to assure the right amount of product.
- Contract for cleaning and janitorial services with a vendor who uses nonhazardous or less-hazardous cleaning supplies.



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- Purchase or lease washable, reusable cleaning cloths.
- Use cloth roll towels or air dryers in restrooms instead of paper products.
- Replace disposable filters for air circulation systems with reusable filters.
- Use paint that contains fewer or no Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and heavy metals to promote worker safety and a healthier workplace.
- Plan purchases carefully to avoid leftovers, such as paint.
- Install water-saving devices on toilets and automatic faucets. Fix leaking faucets.
- Replace inefficient lights with high-efficiency fluorescent lamps.
- Use motion sensors to turn off lights when a room is not in use.
- Have your heating and cooling system inspected and audited for energy efficiency.

### VI. Helpful Resources

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- Green Guardian Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guide:  
<http://www.greenguardian.com/businesses/helpful-sites/environmental purchasing>
- US Mayors Recycling at Work: <http://www.usmayors.org/USCM/recycle/>
- Earth 911 Business Resources: <http://www.earth911.org/usa/master.asp?s=lib&a=brrc/default.asp>
- Waste Reduction Posters: <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BizWaste/Posters/>
- Sample electronic disposal flowchart: <http://www.du.edu/recycling/flowchart.html>
- Cell phone, PDA & Printer Toner Donation: <http://www.recyclingappeal.com>
- Wireless Recycling: <http://www.recellular.com/recycling/donatePhones.asp>
- PET Plastic Container Resources: <http://www.napcor.com/index.htm>
- Food Recycling: [http://156.98.19.245/download/Food\\_Reuse\\_Recycling.pdf](http://156.98.19.245/download/Food_Reuse_Recycling.pdf)
- World's Shortest Comprehensive Recycling Guide: <http://www.obviously.com/recycle/guides/shortest.html>
- Recycling More Obscure Materials: <http://www.obviously.com/recycle/guides/hard.html>
- EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Supplier Database: [http://cpg.epa.tms.icfi.com/user/cpg\\_search.cfm](http://cpg.epa.tms.icfi.com/user/cpg_search.cfm)
- Green Seal Product Database: <http://www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/index.cfm>
- EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines: Note: Links below may change periodically, but all should be available from the product procurement link: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products.htm>
  - Paper/Paper Products: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/paper.htm>
  - Binder, Clipboards, File Folders, Clip Portfolios & Presentation Folders:  
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure/products/binders.htm>
  - Office Furniture: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/furniture.htm>
  - Office Recycling Containers & Waste Receptacles:  
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure/products/office.htm>
  - Plastic Desktop Accessories: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/desktop.htm>
  - Plastic Envelopes: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/envelope.htm>
  - Plastic Trash Bags: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/trashbag.htm>
  - Printer Ribbons: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/ribbons.htm>



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- Toner Cartridges: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/nonhw/procure/products/toner.htm>

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<sup>1</sup> Sources for the checklists of measures include:

**GreenGuardian.com Office Waste Reduction Checklist:**

[http://www.greenguardian.com/business/rwmg\\_checklist.asp](http://www.greenguardian.com/business/rwmg_checklist.asp)

**Reduce.org:** <http://www.reduce.org/workplace/index.html>

**PG&E:** <http://www.pge.com/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/tips/large/officeplans/>

**Inform:** [http://www.informinc.org/fact\\_office.php](http://www.informinc.org/fact_office.php)

<sup>2</sup> Additional source: <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BizWaste/FactSheets/Campaign.htm>