

THE GREEN OFFICE HANDBOOK

HOW BUSINESSES CAN SAVE THE PLANET AND SAVE MONEY

A Green Office Handbook produced by emissions reduction company, Carbon Planet will help businesses looking for ways to save money and also save the planet.

The Handbook provides practical and simple steps to turn a business completely green while reducing waste, improving efficiency and reducing costs.

Some of the simple steps outlined in the Carbon Planet Green Office Handbook are:

- Set the computer to the sleep function after it is left idle for a fixed amount of time. This simple measure helps to conserve energy and reduce the electricity bill. Setting your computer and the copier to power save throughout the day also helps and shutting down at the end of each day is a must! Employees don't work 24-7, so why do computers?
- No one ever thinks of mood lighting being associated with the workplace. However businesses can reduce their electricity bill by simply remembering to turn the lights out. There is no need to have the lights on in the office kitchen for example all day, if there is no one in there all the time. Sensor lights are a simple solution to this problem. Similarly, makes sure all lights and computers are turned off at the end of the day.
- Low energy light bulbs are not only cost effective as they reduce energy costs in the long-term but they also have a longer life, lasting up to eight times longer than ordinary bulbs. So you are protecting your bottom line as well!
- How many copies do you really need? Avoid misprints and mass print out sessions. Use the double-sided function on the photocopier and the printer – it saves time and paper. We all know the saying “killing a rainforest” when it comes to printing and photocopying, so make sure you think before you print.
- Use the virtual red pen: most word processing systems include the track changes and highlighter function. If a document requires multiple drafts use these tools on “soft drafts” rather than printing out and editing multiple copies by hand. Similarly be a perfectionist, double check and proof read work before your print it off.
- If you have to print, use old copies for scrap paper. Pages can be used in full size or cut down to half size. Staple together to make mini notepads.
- Establish green meetings. Meetings no longer need to be held in person with tools such as instant messenger and video and phone conferencing available.
- Every one hates it when our letterboxes are stuffed with pamphlets and junk mail. The same thing occurs in the office. Taking your name off unnecessary or old mailing lists will reduce the amount of waste materials.
- Reuse and recycle. One of the easiest way businesses can reduce their environmental footprint is to recycle. Installing an easy-to-use recycling system in the office will help to reduce the environmental impact. Recycling of office waste saves landfill space, three cubic yards of landfill space is saved for every tonne of paper recycled.
- Re-use envelopes for internal circulation and buy reusable labels.
- An office notice board is a simple way of circulating non-urgent information to staff rather than numerous memos.
- Use natural and recyclable products. Office paper can now be bought in 100% recycled styles. Similarly, purchase office goods that can be used more than once, such as refillable pens and highlighters – the savings will become obvious in a short period.

- Sharing is caring. The benefits of sharing also extend to the environment. The sharing of occasional-use items such as hole punchers and staplers means less stationary having to be ordered and less money spent.
- The morning tea break and the 3pm coffee runs are workplace institutions. However, while they boost team morale the same cannot be said for the environment. Those disposable polystyrene cups take years to break down and be recycled. Instead encourage staff to bring in their own mugs or purchase a set with the company logo. These can be used over and over.
- Similarly, the dishwasher is now commonplace in most offices but make sure it is used only when it is full. Dishwashers simply are a great place to store dirty dishes – use them!
- Who doesn't like to have a nice view? Positioning desks near windows draws on the natural light, reducing energy costs and may just provide a little inspiration. Similarly, skylights and solar panels can be installed in new offices.
- Plants are good for offices. Not only are they decorative but they help to absorb harmful gases.
- Everyone loves to receive something in the mail, but a large number of deliveries also equate to a large amount of waste. Instructing the mail room or shipping service to re-use boxes and wrappings cuts costs and also reduces the amount of office rubbish.
- We have all heard the saying 'think global and act local'. Localism is any easy way to support the environment. Choosing local products and materials will not only reduce energy but also save on transport costs.
- Use suppliers that have CO₂ free™ supply chains or are completely CO₂ free™. Not only will you have the environmental benefits but chances are you will share similar business philosophies so working together will be a breeze!
- The company car is becoming more and more commonplace however it contributes enormously to global warming. If the business needs a company car, purchase a hybrid car - they are cheaper to run and environmentally friendly. Similarly, encourage car pooling for employees who live close together. It helps to reduce carbon emissions and create relationships amongst employees outside of the office.
- Making the office green makes a happy office. An increasing amount of people recycle at home, so getting the office involved in such an important environmental cause fosters good workplace spirit.

Undoubtedly, global warming is a major issue for many Australians and being green is almost a mainstream response to the problem, with many Australians whole-heartedly embracing the concept.

But even more importantly, with emerging issues like corporate social responsibility, ethical investment, widespread drought, skyrocketing fuel prices and climate change dominating the headlines, being environmentally aware should now also be finding its way into corporate boardrooms.

"Australians believe in green living, and green working should be no different," says Dave Sag, co-founder and CEO of Carbon Planet. "People often forget about their offices contributing to global warming. Businesses contribute quite extensively to the problem but they are also part of the solution.

"The most important thing for businesses to remember is that it is very easy to reduce your impact on the environment. Reducing our impact on the environment is just a three step process; measure, reduce, offset. It's not expensive and going green can even save you money in the long term," he added.



“Quite simply, businesses that are early movers on going green stand to be the long-term winners,” said Mr Sag.

Commissioning an independently verified emissions audit is the first essential step businesses can take in removing their environmental footprint. Carbon Planet created the Green Office Handbook to give practical tips to transform businesses from polluters to environmentally-responsible powerhouses. The Green Office Handbook shows that going green is not as hard or as expensive as it may seem and introducing environmentally friendly practices into the work place can actually boost the bottom line.

Certified carbon credits are a way businesses can offset their carbon emissions immediately. Businesses can take critical steps now while acting to improve long-term sustainability.

For further information see www.carbonplanet.com

ABOUT CARBON PLANET

Carbon Planet is an Australian owned company and the only Australian retailer of fully certified carbon credits. In continuing its fight against climate change, Carbon Planet retails carbon credits which involves various methods, including tree planting, to offset the carbon created by individuals or companies, conducts emissions audits and offers reduction strategies to those who want to become environmentally friendly. One carbon credit equates to the removal of one tonne of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
