

Energy

Becoming more energy efficient can reduce your carbon footprint – and cut costs by 20% – according to the Carbon Trust. Better processes and alternative energy sources are important but the starting point is simply changing employee behaviour.

Considering whole life energy use of new equipment

When it comes to hardware, think carefully about where you are making savings. A cheaper machine may use much more energy so do the costs of running it really make it value for money? Bear in mind that modern presses are up to 60% more energy-efficient than older presses [Source: Green-print.net].

Installing energy-efficient electric motors

Tools powered by electricity use one tenth of the energy of compressed-air alternatives [Source: Envirowise]. Seek out savings from your printing equipment too.

Investing in energy efficient air compressors

Energy-efficiency is becoming a legal requirement in the design of an increasing number of appliances, so check with your suppliers on the options available to you. Think about long-term gains rather than up-front costs. Some energy-saving technologies also come with tax incentives. For more information visit:

www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/275207/275435/

Introducing an equipment maintenance plan

You can make a lot of savings simply by maintaining your existing equipment correctly, fixing air leaks and changing filters. Check with your suppliers about servicing and long-term maintenance advice if you are unsure about the performance of your existing machinery.

Using energy-efficient lights

Lights and light bulbs are one of the simplest and most visible ways of demonstrating a commitment to saving energy. For the same amount of light, you'll use less energy – and the bulbs should last longer too.

Ensuring employees always switch off lights, computers and machines when not in use

Your energy saving initiatives will only work with the active support of your workforce. This should not be hard either. According to a Carbon Trust survey, 85% of employees support energy-saving schemes. Draw up a list of new behaviours (e.g. switching off lights, not leaving machines on stand-by) and make sure everyone knows how they need to change.

Monitoring energy use

Monitoring and measuring are the first two steps to making any sustainable savings. Bills are the easiest way of noting energy use, while log books can help you chart how different kinds of energy are used in your business – and where you might make savings.

Making sure employees know why you need to reduce energy

Posters, training and signage are all important for getting the message across – but the point is not just what you need to do to save energy, but why. Your Environmental Action Plan should outline how your strategies fit with business goals. Whether it is for reasons of business (saving money), marketing (showing you are in step with your clients' needs) or ethics (reducing your carbon footprint) – people need to know. For more information visit: www.businesslink.gov.uk (click the Energy and Efficiency link). Also try the Carbon Trust Action Plan: www.carbontrust.co.uk/APT/

Key words

Carbon footprint – a measure of the impact your activities have on the environment in general and climate change in particular. Calculate yours here: www.carbonfootprint.com

Environmental Action Plan – a programme, drawn up by your business, outlining what needs to change, how you are going to change it and when you are going to change it by.

Funds for Print

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