

Hotel/Motel Waste Reduction

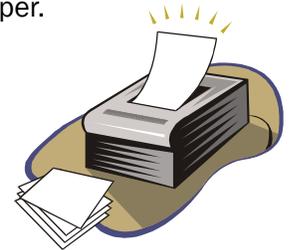
EXECUTIVE OFFICE • PURCHASING

This waste reduction fact sheet is one in a series produced by the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) to assist the lodging industry and concerned professionals in efforts to reduce waste and enjoy the benefits of cost savings and a public image as environmentally responsible organizations.

Hotels and motels can conserve natural resources by implementing simple waste prevention efforts and purchasing with the environment in mind. This fact sheet contains positive environmental options that lodging establishments have used to reduce waste. These suggestions should be adopted into your executive offices and throughout the property.

FRONT OFFICE

- Make two-sided copies and print letters and reports on both sides of the page.
- Cancel duplicate subscriptions and share periodicals among associates.
- Reuse paper that is clean on one side for drafts and internal memos. Consider dedicating one printer for drafts, and stock it with scrap paper.
- Use paper memos sparingly; use e-mail and voice mail, or post memos in a central area.
- Reuse envelopes or use two-way envelopes.
- Avoid using cover sheets to send fax transmittals.
- Donate old or outdated equipment and furniture.
- Make scratch pads from used paper.
- Recycle office paper, corrugated cardboard, glass, aluminum and steel cans.
- Replace disposable dishes with durable dishes and flatware.
- Keep a supply of extra mugs and glasses in the break area.



PURCHASING

General Suggestions

- Purchase paper products — such as letterhead, stationery, tissues and towels — with the highest possible levels of post-consumer recycled content. Major chains, including Ramada, Hyatt and Hotel Intercontinental, have implemented company-wide policies of purchasing recycled content paper products.
- Choose remanufactured toner cartridges.
- Eliminate unnecessary packaging (plastic, corrugated cardboard) and products.
- Choose recycled content food trays, to-go boxes, floor mats, trash containers and liners and storage bins. When renovating, consider using building materials made from recycled content, such as ceiling tiles, carpets, paint, floor tiles and wallboard.
- Consider products that support rain forests, such as cereals, candies, cookies, popcorn/nut mixes and juices.

HOUSEKEEPING SUPPLIES

- Choose vegetable-based, biodegradable soaps.
- Consider purchasing refillable dispensers for soaps, shampoos, etc.
- Choose less toxic or non-toxic cleaning supplies.
- Choose pump sprays over aerosols wherever possible.

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OFFICE EQUIPMENT

- Choose copiers with duplexing capability.
- Use a plain paper fax machine.
- Look for equipment that meets EPA's Energy Star designation, which means it powers down to energy-saving levels when not in use.



PRINT JOBS

- Print reasonable quantities.
- Print brochures, letterhead, business cards and programs on recycled paper. Consider chlorine-free paper.
- Double-side if possible.
- Switch to soy-based and other nontoxic inks.

Santa Monica, Calif., gets “greener”

California's City of Santa Monica Toxic Use Reduction Program was initiated to identify and reduce amounts of toxic products used in all areas of city operations. The program included a pilot testing phase to evaluate the effectiveness of various less toxic or nontoxic custodial products. Pilot study results (below) were positive and contributed to the development of purchasing specifications.

- Replaced 15 of 17 of the city's cleaning products with less toxic or nontoxic alternatives.
- Eliminated about 3,200 pounds of hazardous waste material.
- Experienced a cost savings of 5 percent by purchasing concentrated products. [lower packaging and shipping costs; lower cost per application; less waste]
- Increased morale of city custodians who recognized the city's concern for their health and working conditions.

C A S E S T U D Y

Environmental factors in operation at Arbor House, Madison, Wis.

Cathie and John Imes, owners of the eight-room Arbor House bed and breakfast in Madison, Wis., have incorporated waste prevention principles and recycled materials throughout. Wooden floors were “harvested” from the Sears Roebuck Building in Chicago. Other floors are covered with tile that is 80 percent former windshield glass. Bathroom tiles are 55 percent recycled glass.

Arbor House considers environmental factors in all areas of its operations, from using a plain-paper fax machine to avoid generating non-recyclable fax paper to purchasing food from local farmers. Low-toxicity paints, stains, carpeting and construction materials were used to expand the inn. Plant-derived paints and wood stains with low-VOC (volatile organic compound) content were supplied by a local paint store. The inn also uses undyed sheets and towels made of organically grown natural fabrics and washes with home-made fabric softener. Allergy-prone guests have reported that these products have helped alleviate their symptoms.

For a small inn, cost is critical. For example, the owners considered installing refillable shampoo and soap dispensers but found the cost prohibitive. Instead, they opted for an organically derived shampoo purchased in gallon jugs, which they pour into refillable 16-ounce bottles as needed.

“We’re trying to dispel the myth that ‘green’ costs more,” says Cathie Imes. “In some instances, it does. But if you look at the totality of the product — how it was produced, distributed, transported, how long it lasts and what happens to it when you’re done with it — when you look at all these things, the playing field is more level. You have to look at the complete product, not just price and quality.”



The N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) provides free, non-regulatory technical assistance and training on methods to eliminate, reduce or recycle wastes before they become pollutants or require disposal. Telephone DPPEA at (919) 715-6500 or (800) 763-0136 or e-mail at nowaste@p2pays.org for further information about the issues discussed in this fact sheet or to discuss any of your waste reduction concerns.

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