



# Edmonton's Small Business Eco Challenge

## Eco-Tips for Greening your Business

Following are actions that businesses can take to conserve resources *and* save money! Many of these solutions are low cost, and can be as simple as raising awareness among management, staff and customers.

### Energy and Climate Change

- Consider green building design and practices when re-locating or renovating.
- Check your utility bills on a regular basis and become familiar with the reasons for fluctuations in energy use...and changes in your monthly bills.
- Conduct an energy audit.
- Develop energy reduction strategies based on the nature of your business and its operations.
- Check out the availability of renewable energy like wind and solar.
- Purchase energy-efficient equipment, such as those with the Energy Star seal. This equipment can save you up to 75% in energy costs.
- Install occupancy sensors on lights in less-used areas.
- Use energy-efficient light bulbs.
- Make use of windows and blinds to help manage indoor temperature and lighting.
- Install reflectors on light fixtures to make them more efficient.
- Turn off equipment, such as computers, monitors, photocopiers and appliances when not in use.
- Use cold water instead of hot where possible.
- Keep your equipment well maintained.

### Food Security

- Determine what percentage of your food requirements are currently being grown locally.
- Build direct relationships with local producers, wholesalers and retailers.
- Source a local choice in foods, produce and beverages.
- Start by purchasing locally what you can now, and then expand these choices as you become more aware of what is available close to home. Before long, you'll find that local purchasing is second nature, and you'll wonder why you didn't buy locally sooner.



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## Solid Waste

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
- Compost.
- Become more aware of the waste you generate and how you dispose of waste.
- Choose a waste hauler that diverts waste from landfills by composting and recycling.
- Set targets for raw material and waste reduction or elimination in order to improve efficiency. Consider conducting a waste audit.
- Look for ways to eliminate or reduce use of raw materials that aren't part of your final product or service, such as paper used for administrative purposes.
- Use recycled materials where possible (e.g., rubber mats and tiles from used tires, post-consumer recycled paper).
- Consider working together with other businesses to share the cost of recycling.
- Minimize packaging at all levels of your operations. Less packaging in means less packaging out which reduces waste management costs.
- Substitute more environmentally favourable products for toxic or environmentally harmful chemicals.
- Use reusables instead of disposables.
- Ask your suppliers about the environmental policies they may have in place.

## Healthy Ecosystems – Land

- Chose green landscaping practices, materials and supplies.
- Maintain flower gardens or edible landscapes.
- Reduce pesticide use.
- Grasscycle: leave grass clippings on the lawn to naturally decompose.
- Avoid activities that would contaminate your site.
- If relocating your business in the future, consider selecting a site close to transit or within walking distances.



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## Healthy Ecosystems - Water

- Link water conservation with energy-efficiency measures. When planning upgrades, energy and cost savings are often possible when the methods of pumping, heating, using, and disposing of water are considered.
- Reduce water use by replacing leaking fixtures and installing low-flow toilets and tap aerators.
- Turn down water temperature settings and use cold water instead of hot water when possible.
- Keep jugs of water in the fridge instead of running taps to get cold water.
- Reduce water pressure where possible.
- Install rain barrels for outdoor watering.

## Healthy Ecosystems – Air

- Identify energy-efficient technologies and processes that reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Implement measures that will improve indoor air quality like low VOC paints, replacing heating system or air filters, improving ventilation and growing plants indoors.
- Choose fuel-efficient company vehicles or those that use alternative power sources, and regularly maintain them for optimal fuel economy and performance.
- Minimize driving by planning deliveries and pickups carefully.
- Educate drivers about fuel-efficient driving (e.g., driving at the speed limit, reducing idling time, keeping tires inflated).
- Provide bicycle storage and encourage staff to use active transportation (cycling or walking).
- Encourage staff to use transit (EST@Work) or carpool when commuting to and from work.



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## Additional Resources:

A number of organizations provide additional ideas for ways to green your business. And, remember to check this website throughout the summer to find more information to help you go green!

### City of Edmonton

[http://www.edmonton.ca/for\\_residents/garbage\\_recycling/commercial-waste-management-services.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/garbage_recycling/commercial-waste-management-services.aspx)

<http://www.edmonton.ca/co2re>

<http://www.edmonton.ca/waste>

<http://www.edmonton.ca/thewaywegreen>

### One Simple Act (for the workplace)

<http://www.onesimpleact.alberta.ca/docs/fast.pdf>

<http://www.onesimpleact.alberta.ca/get-involved/work.asp>

<http://www.onesimpleact.alberta.ca/success-stories/>

### Recycling Council of Alberta

<http://www.recycle.ab.ca>

### Live Local Edmonton

<http://www.live-local.ca/living-local-matters2>