

SPARE A THOUGHT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT DURING **WASTE PREVENTION WEEK**



Improve the environmental performance of your business by preventing waste, reducing energy and reducing water consumption!

WASTE quantities, energy consumption and water consumption are ever increasing and while they are part and parcel of all business activity steps can be taken to ensure that these resources are used as efficiently as possible.

Managing the environmental performance of your business means putting systems in place that will allow you and your staff identify areas where excess waste is produced, or where excess energy or water is consumed in the course of your day-to-day activities.

You can potentially save money by examining the type of waste that ends up in your bins, the amount of energy you are consuming and the quantity of water used in your business every year.

Resource efficiency is mainly about stopping valuable materials being wasted in the first place!

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Significant savings can be made by ensuring that waste is managed properly in business. It is important to identify the quantity and type of waste you produce, what can be prevented, composted or recycled. If your business serves food, reducing your food waste should be a priority, as doing this will improve your environmental performance and save you money.

- In Ireland over 3 million tonnes of municipal waste is produced each year!
- SMEs create over 50% of this commercial and industrial waste!
- Waste alone often costs a business 5-20 times the cost of the actual disposal!
- Wastage of resources costs companies up to 4.5% of turnover!

Top tips to improve Waste Management in Business

General

- Know how much waste you dispose of
- Know the cost of waste disposal
- Designate a person to monitor waste on site
- Segregate waste to ensure maximum recycling and composting
- Request suppliers to use reusable and returnable packaging
- Identify ways of reducing your food waste
- Buy in bulk
- Segregate all hazardous waste and ensure correct disposal
- Create set procedures for receiving and handling goods
- Consider improving process controls to reduce wastage
- Carry out planned preventative maintenance
- See if waste streams can be further segregated for on-site re-use

Packaging

- Investigate returning packaging to suppliers
- Ask suppliers to minimise packaging
- Compact cardboard and plastics
- Use shredded paper for infill

Canteen/Kitchen

- Have sufficient recycling/organic receptacles throughout
- Create a list of reusable/recyclable items
- Use non-disposable tableware and cutlery
- Avoid single portion sugar, coffee etc.
- Compost organic waste



Food Waste

- Look at portion control - too large and it is a waste
- Introduce a stock rotation policy
- Label and date food in reusable containers
- Introduce staff training and standard recipes for consistent results
- Cut down on food waste by vacuum-packing food
- Reuse left-over food where appropriate

We throw out 30% of the food we buy!

Office

- Re-use scrap paper - have collection points near printers / photocopiers
- Return unwanted post and remove name from unwanted mail databases
- Set up a central collection point for reusable office supplies
- Use email and bulletin boards for office communication
- Encourage double sided printing and photocopying
- Recycle printer and toner cartridges
- Use reusable inter-office envelopes
- If possible, switch to electronic billing for customers

ENERGY CONSERVATION

In business the use of electricity, oil and gas will in general make up a large portion of your total energy spend. Depending on the type of business, there will be variations between these energy sources.

Energy is an increasingly expensive resource and one that always deserves the utmost attention in terms of conservation. Monitoring and management of electricity, oil and gas on site is very important. Businesses should endeavor to monitor usage by taking regular meter readings, comparing use with production or turnover and monitoring invoices through inputting data onto a data sheet.

Energy facts and figures

- A computer monitor left on standby consumes €19 of electricity per year
- Lights on overnight in an average size office (45 people) would waste enough energy to microwave 945 dinners!
- A systematic resource efficiency programme can save up to 1% of turnover!

Top tips to conserve Energy in Business

General

- Quantify your annual energy consumption
- Quantify your annual cost of energy
- Identify a staff member to monitor energy
- Review your energy management practices annually
- Identify ways of reducing your energy consumption
- Examine energy tariff for best deal
- Examine bills for wattless charges
- Run staff awareness campaigns
- Purchase AAA energy-rated equipment
- Check buildings regularly for draughts and signs of damp
- Adequately insulate the building (roofs, cavity walls, lofts etc)



Office-based

- Activate energy saving devices in computers
- Switch off office equipment when not in use
- Clean fans and filters for AC/heating systems regularly
- Avoid open windows when heating is on

Lighting

- Ensure all lights are off during periods of non-occupancy
- Use energy efficient and long life lighting (up to 70% savings)
- Check if fewer lights meet lighting requirements
- Check if timers and motion sensors can be used
- Check if lights are cleaned annually
- Label all light switches



Heating

- Use high efficiency boilers - monitor and service regularly
- Stop simultaneous heating and cooling
- Check thermostat settings regularly and situate thermostats correctly
- Heating and cooling should be co-ordinated with occupancy
- Insulate hot water pipes and valves
- Ensure heating controls are working and set correctly

WATER CONSERVATION

Water conservation is a good way to green your business. To conserve water and save money you need to implement a water conservation programme in your business targeting the main water using areas. Depending on your business this could include such areas as processing, delicatessens, kitchens and toilets. Water may be regarded as a low-cost resource, however treated water is a valuable commodity. It is often easy to save money through the implementation of low-cost water reduction measures. Most businesses now have a water meter and will see the benefits of saving water.

- On average the daily water consumption per person in Ireland is over 148 litres
- Water wastage can cost as much as 1% of business turnover
- Every Euro saved on resource efficiency goes straight to the bottom line!
- Payback periods for resource efficiency initiatives are often months, not years!

Top tips to conserve Water in Business

General

- Quantify your annual water consumption
- Quantify your annual cost of water
- Designate a staff member to monitor water on site
- Review your water management practices annually
- Identify ways of reducing your water consumption
- Provide training to increase employee awareness
- Consider water efficiency when purchasing equipment
- Consider alternative water sources (e.g. rainwater)
- Retrofit old or inefficient fixtures
- Check plant for leaks and water waste on a regular basis
- Shut off water to unused areas
- Eliminate unnecessary wash-downs
- Fit spray-heads and flow regulators to taps to control the amount of water used. They can reduce tap water use by up to 80%.
- Consider water-efficiency when purchasing new equipment. For example, liquid ring vacuum pumps can be replaced by dry vacuum pumps.

Kitchen

- Use water conservation fixtures (such as restrictors in taps)
- Fit spray-heads and flow regulators to taps to control the amount of water used
- Use trigger operated sprays when preparing food
- Allow sufficient time for food products to defrost naturally and not to rely on running water to thaw food
- Ensure dishwashers are only used when fully loaded
- Regularly checked and de-scale any nozzles on your equipment
- Set the rate of flow on equipment such as ice machines and potato peelers to a minimum as this will ensure best performance while saving water

Toilets

- Use water conservation fixtures (such as restrictors in taps, toilets and urinals)
- Consider fitting toilet cisterns with devices that reduce the flush volume - you could save up to 3 litres per flush.
- Think about installing dual flush toilets
- Fit urinals with pressure switches and sensors

In addition to the environmental improvement that can be achieved in business by introducing good housekeeping measures, potential additional benefits include:

- Marketing opportunities
- Economic competitiveness
- Increased awareness
- Potential savings
- Improved resource use
- Enhanced corporate image
- Increased capacity amongst staff



REMEMBER
It pays to think waste prevention



GREEN YOUR BUSINESS, IMPROVE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND SAVE SOME MONEY!

Further information is available from Sinéad Ní Mhainnín,
Environment Section, Galway County Council **091-476488** or **snimhain@galwaycoco.ie**

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
SUPPORTING NATIONAL
WASTE PREVENTION WEEK

