

## **Green Your Work**

### **Save energy**

Optimizing the energy settings for computers and other electronic devices can be more than a modest energy saver. Shut down electronic devices when you leave for the day (“standby” settings will continue to draw power even when not in use). **By plugging hardware into a power strip with an on/off switch, the whole desktop setup can be turned off at once.** Also, be sure to power down inkjet printers before shutting off the power — they need to seal their cartridges). Printers, scanners, and other peripherals that are only used occasionally can be unplugged until they’re needed. And of course, **turn off lights and unplug unused equipment** in unoccupied spaces.

### **Go Digital**

**The greenest paper is no paper at all**, so keep things digital whenever possible. The more you do online, the less you need paper. Keep files on computers instead of in file cabinets. This also makes it easier to make backup copies or take them with you when you move to a new office. Review documents onscreen rather than printing them out. Send email instead of paper letters, **eliminate blank pages from documents before printing** and **convert files to .PDF** formats for paperless document sharing.

### **Use green office materials**

Some paper use can’t be avoided. When you do use paper, make sure to use **recycled paper** and envelopes that have been processed and colored using eco-friendly methods. Pens and pencils can also be made of recycled materials and refillable pens and markers are preferable to disposable ones. Use biodegradable soaps and **recycled paper** in the bathroom or kitchen and provide biodegradable cleaners for custodial staff. Buy in bulk so that shipping and packaging waste are reduced, reuse shipping boxes, recycle printer cartridges and purchase recycled office product replacements.

### **Green the Office Break Room**

Use less plastic. Use washable cups, plates, and utensils whenever possible.

### **Telecommute if you can**

More than 44 million Americans telecommute. Instant messaging, video conferencing, and other innovative workflow tools are making effective telecommuting a reality. It’ll save you the time you would have spent on the trip and as a bonus, you get to work in your pajamas. Also, consider the possibility of working four 10-hour days instead of five eight-hour days (a consolidated work week), **cutting the energy and time spent on commuting by 20 percent** and giving you some lovely three-day weekends.

## **Move toward a green workspace**

Start with good furniture, good lighting, and good air.

Furniture can be manufactured from recycled materials. Incandescent bulbs can be replaced with **compact fluorescents** and there is an ever-growing selection **of LED desk lamps** that use small amounts of energy. Not only is natural daylight a free source of lighting for the office, it improves worker productivity and satisfaction. Workspace air quality is also crucial. Good ventilation and safe materials will keep employees healthy.