



The Daily Gleaner

'Green' your Business for Profit and the Planet

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Are you the owner of a small- to medium-sized business in Fredericton? Are you the pastor of a church, or the executive director or chairperson of a non-profit organization? If you have influence over any space where people do business or work in offices; where people come to meet or play; or even storage and warehouse space; then you have a great opportunity to reduce your organization's carbon footprint (greenhouse gas emissions – GHGs). This means reducing your energy consumption which lowers your operating costs and puts your organization on a more sustainable path.

Why should this matter to you? On an altruistic level, because business decisions with low environmental impacts are good for the planet. On a community pride level, Fredericton has a goal to reduce community GHGs by 6% by 2010, and you can help. And finally, from a business perspective, making 'green' choices in the way you operate can save you money and make some too!

In 2006, The Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Pollution Probe (a national non-profit organization) released an insightful and practical publication called '*A Guide to Climate Change for Small- to Medium-Sized Enterprises*'. This free publication is available online in both English and French at www.chamber.ca or www.pollutionprobe.org.

This publication identifies the main business risks from climate change are increased costs and loss of revenue. As governments around the world develop and implement plans to address climate change, energy costs are predicted to rise. And other risks include rising insurance premiums, more expensive raw materials and supplies, and higher production and transportation costs. If you think these factors don't affect you – have a look at where your products and services come from, what they are made of, and how they get here.

Greenhouse gas emissions will become a cost of doing business. As a result, the value of some business assets will decrease (such as an inefficient fleet of trucks), while the value of other assets will increase (such as energy efficient technologies).

So how do you start being a 'green' business? The Chamber/Pollution Probe publication provides a list of 'quick and easy' actions with little or no cost and immediate savings:

Keep exterior doors closed during hot and cold days to prevent loss of heated air in winter and cooled air in summer.

Turn off computer monitors when not in use, even if only for 15 minutes. A computer monitor uses up to 75% of the energy powering the computer.

Enable 'ENERGY STAR' features on all computers. Look in the Windows control panel under display settings for this feature. And turning off computers when they are not can save up to \$75 in energy costs per year per computer.

Turn off photocopiers during off-hours. Operating photocopy equipment efficiently will reduce energy use by 25% or more. And setting the copier to the energy-efficient setting will reduce the amount of energy consumed when it is not in operation.

Turn off lights when leaving your office and other unoccupied areas, such as copy rooms, break rooms, conference rooms and restrooms. Each incandescent light turned off can save about \$30 annually and reduce the number of replacement bulbs needed each year.

Implement anti-idling practices in your business/organization – for customers, employees, suppliers, delivery vehicles, etc.

Is this topic beginning to intrigue you? Check out this publication and learn about even bigger things you can do in your business to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. It also presents case studies of real-life Canadian businesses who have implemented energy saving practices with great success.

And if you are part of a church or faith group there is an innovative program called 'Greening Sacred Spaces' which provides practical tools to encourage faith groups to reduce greenhouse gases and practice sustainable living. More information can be found at: www.faith-commongood.net, including a 'Practical Guide to Improving the Energy Efficiency of your Religious Building'.

Green matters where you work, play and pray – take action now to reduce your energy use and greenhouse gas emissions!

Sonya Hull is a consultant and City of Fredericton Project Manager for the Green Matters greenhouse gas reduction campaign. If you would like more information on how to 'green' your workplace go to www.greenmattersfredericton.com and check out the 'At Work' section, or send an e-mail to: greenmatters@fredericton.ca