

Simple Steps to Green Your Business

There are many ways to green your business. Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost your waste. Reduce waste by purchasing products with less packaging and using resources as efficiently as possible. Not sure what can be recycled and composted? Visit [SF Recycling](#) to find out. Use the [EcoFindeRRR](#) tool to find out where to recycle items such as appliances and electronics.
2. Purchase goods that are made of recycled materials and that are reusable, compostable, or recyclable whenever possible.
3. Use energy efficient light bulbs such as compact fluorescents. To find out more about lighting, visit [Energy Star – Lighting](#).
4. Make sure the lights, AC and heating, faucets and all other equipment are turned off when not in use. To help, install sensors and programmable thermostats, or post reminders such as “switch off” and “conserve water” by light switches, printers and copiers, and other equipment.
5. [Shop local, and shop green](#). Purchasing from local merchants, vendors, farms and manufacturers supports your local economy while reducing environmental damage from long-distance transport. Buying sustainably-made supplies including office supplies, building material, fabrics, and food products helps the environment and improves labor conditions for the people involved in producing the items. Before buying a product, check if it is organic, locally-made, and if not local then fair-trade certified. If you don't know, ask!
6. Use organic, biodegradable cleaning products instead of toxic ones.
7. Purchase energy efficient appliances with [Energy Star](#) certifications. Get [rebates](#) for your energy-efficient appliances from PG&E.
8. Conserve water by:
 - Purchasing cost-effective [low-flow toilets](#).
 - Placing a heavy object such as a brick into your toilet tank if you have an inefficient toilet.
 - Installing inexpensive faucet aerators, or ordering a free one from the [SFPUC](#).
 - Not leaving the water running while washing dishes.
9. Reduce unwanted mail by contacting the sender and removing your name. Find out more at the [Bay Area Junk Mail Reduction Campaign](#) and [Green Dimes](#).
10. Serve water and give take-out materials only upon request, and use [compostable take-out materials](#).
11. Print and copy double-sided whenever possible. Keep a stack of used paper for printing on the other side. View a preview of documents before printing them to avoid re-printing.
12. Promote less-polluting modes of transportation. Encourage employees to bike, walk and take public transportation to work through incentives and support, such as setting up bike racks in your office, offering commuter checks and participating in [Spare the Air](#).
13. Perform regular maintenance on your HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system.
14. Use latex- or water-based paints, finishes and varnishes rather than oil-based paints. Buy paints that have zero or low VOC (volatile organic compounds).
15. Form a Green Team in your organization consisting of a few concerned individuals who will take the lead in initiating environmental change.