

4 million careful owners

Taking action at work

Your daily decisions about transport, waste and energy use are affecting the climate because of the greenhouse gas emissions they produce. There are many steps you can take in your workplace to help reduce these emissions. Businesses will also benefit - by using energy and other resources more efficiently, production costs (such as energy bills and costs of fuel and waste disposal) can be reduced and competitiveness improved. In addition, creating new products or services that use less energy and produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions can differentiate a business in an increasingly environmentally-conscious marketplace.



What can you do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at work?

Waste

New Zealanders throw away 3.6 million tonnes of rubbish every year or more than 1000 buses full of rubbish every day! Yet around 65% of this rubbish could be recycled or composted instead.

- Reduce paper waste by:
 - printing documents double sided
 - using email instead of faxes/mail
 - re-using blank sides of paper for scrap or fax paper.
- Recycle all paper, glass, tin & plastic items you use at work.
- Use your own mug instead of a plastic or polystyrene mug (these materials don't break down).

Transport

Transport is our country's single largest energy consumer and it's the fastest growing - within New Zealand, transport accounts for over 43% of all consumer energy use and it produces 46% of the country's carbon dioxide emissions.

There are all sorts of small things you can do to cut fuel consumption.

- Walk, cycle or take public transport to work.
- If you need to take a car to work, try to car-pool with colleagues.
- Consider fuel-efficient, low-polluting options when buying work vehicles & regularly service all cars.
- Keep the tyres on your company cars inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressure & have the wheel alignment checked regularly.
- Work from home & use video conference facilities as options to reduce work-related travel.

Did you know?

Less aggressive driving practices can improve fuel economy by up to 30%, so change gear smoothly and watch your following distances to avoid heavy braking and acceleration. Removing roof racks & roof rack loads when not required can save 5-10% in fuel and using air vents instead of the air conditioner can save up to 10% in fuel.



New Zealand 4 million careful owners

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Energy

Every workplace uses electricity. Around two thirds of our electricity is generated using renewable sources such as hydro. The remainder is generated from fossil fuels such as coal and gas which emit the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. To reduce these emissions, we need to think about conserving energy (using less) and being more energy efficient (using energy wisely).

Employees

- At the end of the day ensure lights, computers, computer monitors, photocopiers and printers are switched off.
- Switch off your computer screen if away from your desk for more than 30 minutes.
- In the kitchen, turn off appliances such as microwaves at the wall.
- Turn off lighting in meeting rooms when not in use (the breakeven point of turning off fluorescent tubes is 10 minutes).
- Don't boil a full water heater for drinks if you need only a small amount of hot water. Heat only what you need.
- Use the dishwasher only when you have a full load.
- Make the most of natural daylight and ventilation.

Employers

- Use efficient lighting options such as high efficiency bulbs/fittings.
- Use area-specific lighting instead of lighting large areas.
- Investigate the possibility of installing lighting sensors and timer controls in intermittently used areas such as storerooms and meeting rooms.
- Specify energy-efficient models when purchasing office equipment. Include 'energy star' computers and equipment with shut-down timers and sleep modes.
- Insulate electric cylinders and all hot water pipes.

- Reduce water temperature to the recommended temperature (60°C) if capacity allows.
- Check for leaks and dripping taps.
- Choose a dual-drawer dishwasher instead of a single-drawer model to reduce energy and water usage.
- All heating and cooling systems should have sufficient means of control to ensure they are operating only when the relevant areas are occupied and that areas are heated or cooled to the required temperature.

Useful links/websites

www.reducerubbish.govt.nz

(ideas on how to reduce your rubbish)

www.energywise.org.nz

(tips on being more energy efficient)

www.emprove.org.nz

(tips for reducing the energy your business uses)

www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/transport/

(tips on driving more efficiently, and maintaining and buying motor vehicles)

www.climatechange.govt.nz

(the main NZ Climate Change Office website)

www.eeca.govt.nz

(the main Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority website)

Check out www.4million.org.nz to find out more about how you can join the New Zealanders who are helping to reduce the effects of climate change.

This website also has links to calculators which will help you work out your own greenhouse gas emissions (go to the 'Taking Action' page).



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