



Environmental Media Association

EMA Green Seal for Business Guidelines

The first step in making your organization environmentally sustainable is to set goals and objectives. To do so, lead management must work together to analyze all aspects of the business model to determine what changes to make. These guidelines provide a pathway for the next steps each company can take towards increased sustainability initiatives in their business and in the community it serves.

**Not all guidelines are applicable to your organization*

Staff/Community Engagement

- If you do not have a sustainability department start by creating a committee.
- Provide environmental training to your employees with easy access to training materials (including use of minority languages where needed).
- Encourage your employees to attend or participating in sustainability conferences/events as well as online courses in sustainability or environmental sciences.
- Create employee incentive programs to encourage carpooling, public transportation, alternative fuel vehicles and biking when possible
- Organization participates in community give back projects i.e helps in community garden in local school
- Report/publish your yearly sustainability reports made available to the public
- Create incentive programs (discount, coupons) to encourage the community to participate in the protection of the environment (i.e community to bring back empty products cases, bring back old clothing...)
- Acquire environmental seals/ certificate that pertains to your sector
- Partner with responsible suppliers

Waste Management

- Recycle regularly
- Recycle batteries and e-waste
- Recycle soiled linens and towels
- Recycle your grease waste regularly
- Donate excess food to local shelters
- Donate retired linens, towels and fabrics to organizations in need
- Compost regularly
- Serve water from a water filtration system to customers
- Get rid of plastic water bottled and use reusable water bottles



- Eliminate plastic straws
- Low flow toilets in restrooms
- Waterless urinals
- Drip irrigation system for landscaping
- Grey water system
- Energy star/CEE Tier 2 ice maker
- Prep Sinks 0.5-1.5 gpm (not to exceed)
- Pre-rinse sprayer gallons per wash 0.45 gpm
- Foot pedal-controlled sinks for kitchen use
- Run dishwashers only when full
- Use steamer water to wash off dishwashing area
- Organization should implement a policy in place that prohibits the destruction of any products that could be sold, used or recycled.
- Use more recycled content on products and packaging

Energy Efficiency

- High efficiency laundry machines onsite and offsite
- Energy efficient lighting LED (limited use of compact fluorescents as they contain mercury)
- Occupancy sensors in all rooms
- Energy Star or CEE rated HVAC Programmable thermostats
- Energy Star exhaust fan
- Energy Star office equipment
- Energy Star TVs and Appliances
- Motion sensors or timers for outdoor lighting
- Power down computers and electronics at the close of business
- Retrofit existing equipment - refrigerator strip curtains, high-efficiency evaporative fan motors, variable-speed hood fans and low-flow pre-rinse spray valves are just a few products that can add up to save you thousands of dollars every year.
- Walk in with Temp or Humidity control systems
- Toilet paper with recycled content or FSC paper (FSC = Forest Stewardship Council)
- Restroom paper towels 100% recycled content or FSC paper seat covers 100% recycled content or FSC paper
- Tissues with recycled content or FSC paper
- Offer email receipts or BPA free paper receipts
- Provide recycled paper napkins or FSC paper
- Provide biodegradable take out containers and biodegradable or compostable cups/utensils (compostable if composting is available onsite)



- Provide Reusable, biodegradable or compostable straws (compostable if composting is available onsite)
- Unbleached paper bags
- Biodegradable utensils for “To Go” services (offer reusables for non take out, always best option)
- Digitize paper communication processes as much as possible
- Implement direct deposit employee payment program to limit paper checks
- On-site renewable energy and maximize use of renewable energy in own operations
- implement a Cool roof and energy efficient building envelope
- Develop a plan for an Energy management program

Chemical & Pollution Reduction

- General cleaning products are chemical free and biodegradable
- All bathroom products (soap, shampoo/ conditioner, lotion etc.) for restrooms are eco-friendly and biodegradable
- EPA's safe choice for Dish machine detergents
- No chemical sanitizer in the dishwasher EPA's safe choice for Dish machine detergents
- Remove Harmful chemicals from packaging assembly lines

Transportation

- Preferred parking for Electric cars w/ electric charging stations
- No idling of trucks when delivering goods and services
- Able to take mass transit to location by bus or train
- Bike Rack

Shipping

- Group shipment together whenever possible to save cost and help reduce carbon emission
- Reuse boxes and materials whenever possible
- Minimize your use of cardboards by transporting goods in reusable alternative packaging

Food & Beverage

- Purchasing policies should favor environmentally sustainable suppliers and products, including food, beverages, and consumables.
- Seasonal Organic Produce – Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs - 50% or greater
- Vegan, Vegetarian, Dairy Free, Nut Free and Gluten Free options using icons on menu
- Coffee and Tea certified organic



- 100% Fair Trade – chocolate
- Use Fresh pressed juices, lemonades also use as mixers
- Local Food transported 100 miles or less 25% -35%
- Regional Food transported 300 miles - 25%-50%
- Grow your own food boxes and or work with a local school or community partner
- Provide Organic Produce – Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs - 50% or greater
- Meats & Poultry - Organic, Grass Fed, Farm Raised - 50% or greater (*encourage plant based and meatless days meals)
- Most if not all food, spices, herbs and condiments certified organic and as local as possible or made in house with organic ingredients - 50-75%
- Eggs should be local, farm raised, humanely raised, (organic) - 100%
- Sustainable Fish Purchasing 50%-75%
- Offer Vegan options – at least 2 entrees and 2 appetizers or salads
- Offer Vegetarian Options – at least 2-3 entrees and 2-3 appetizers or salad
- Offer Organic or Biodynamic or SIP Certified Wines 25%
- Offer Organic and Small Batch Spirits 10%
- Offer Craft beer 50%

Sustainable Construction, Materials & Furnishings

- Reuse existing building materials in building
- No or Low VOC paint
- Use FSC or reclaimed wood
- Reuse equipment and materials when possible

Biodiversity Conservation

- The organization demonstrates awareness of natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value.
- The organization is actively managed to support biodiversity conservation.
- The organization is aware of and mitigates, activity with potential to disturb wildlife and habitats.
- Compensation is made where any disturbance has occurred.
- The organization engages with local conservation NGOs.
- The organization gets involved with local communities and nonprofit organizations. This can include volunteering in a local program such as beach clean-up or planting trees/gardens.
- Be mindful of your organization's environmental impact in your community (waste management, development, noise/light pollution).