

# How to green your business: Retail

Want to Go Green but not sure where to start? Here are some tips to reduce the environmental impacts of your retail business.

## Energy

### Equipment

- Lifts/escalators should be maintained every three months and should only be operated during opening hours or use motion-activated escalators to save 15% of escalator power costs.
- Use a timer switch to reduce out-of-hours energy consumption.

### Heating and cooling

- Reduce the need for air conditioning by opening roof lights. Save 20% of cooling costs by not running the ventilation system overnight.
- Reduce heating thermostat settings by 1°C to save 10% of heating and cooling costs. Most people are comfortable at 19°C. Similarly, set air conditioning not to come on below 24°C.
- Avoid operating heating and cooling systems at the same time.
- Make sure windows and doors are closed when heating or air conditioning is on.
- Air conditioning should be maintained every three months.
- Use timers and temperature control sensors to limit heating or cooling to opening hours.

- Check that insulation (walls, roof and pipes) and draught-proofing is adequate to prevent heat loss.

### Lighting

- Replace used strip lighting with energy efficient lighting.
- Switch off non-essential lighting outside opening hours to save 10% of lighting costs.
- Check lighting levels in back-of-house areas to save 5% of lighting costs.
- Use natural light wherever possible. Clean light fittings, especially plastic diffusers. Make sure lights can be switched off manually (particularly near windows) or install photocell sensors to save 20% of lighting costs.
- Install presence detector lighting controls in places not in constant use, e.g. toilets and store rooms.
- Switch off external and car park lights when there is adequate daylight to save 60% of outside lighting costs.
- Ensure lighting controls are clearly labelled, especially if they are grouped together.

## Waste

### Minimise packaging and waste

- Use modular tote boxes for delivery of small items and reusable zipper bags for clothes.
- Use transit packaging for groups of products (instead of packing them individually).
- Eliminate stock holding.
- Return unwanted clothes hangers for recycling.

- Donate unsold food to local charities.
- Recycle cardboard and plastic waste.
- Provide customers with reusable carry bags rather than disposable plastic bags.
- Avoid overproduction of marketing and publicity material by reviewing distribution lists and regularly updating databases.

- Use electronic communication where possible to reduce printing and faxing. Ensure that your staff are comfortable with new technology and provide training where necessary.
- Cancel junk mail and unwanted publications.
- Minimise food waste by careful ordering and defrosting of minimum quantities of frozen food.

## Recycling

- Provide separate storage systems (e.g. coloured wheeled bins) for easy segregation of waste for recycling.

## Water

- Fit push-button or infrared sensor controlled taps.
- Fit a water displacement device in mono-flush toilet cisterns to reduce the amount of water used per flush.
- Fit an automatic flush controller on urinal systems to ensure that the cistern flushes only during office hours or after use rather than continuously to reduce water use and costs by 50%.
- Fit existing urinals with deodorising pads to remove the need for water flushing, or consider installing waterless urinals if refurbishment is due.

Potential savings are between £70 - £170/urinal/year.

- Check your pipes for leaks, which can be expensive and can cause damage to the building. Check your meter readings regularly and carefully - if you are paying for water that you cannot account for you may have a leak.

## Travel

- Plan deliveries to minimise vehicle movements and to maximise loads and back-hauling.
- Improve facilities for staff cyclists and walkers. Essentials are secure bike racks, showers and lockers.
- Offer staff interest-free loans for public transport season tickets.

- Re-assess your car parking arrangements to include priority parking for car sharers, or charges for non-essential user parking. Use the money raised to fund transport projects.

## Purchasing

- Avoid over-ordering by taking account of local factors and sale patterns.
- Draw up a returns policy covering both undamaged and damaged/faulty items.
- Stock recycled, organic, Fairtrade produce where possible.

- Choose minimally packaged products or ask your suppliers to supply products in less packaging. Ask your suppliers to take excess packaging away with them when they deliver.