

Friday Facts: Reduce Your Paper Waste

We all know that recycling paper preserves natural resources, conserves energy, and reduces pollution and waste, but there is something even more effective than you can do with your paper: reduce the amount that you use. Reducing the amount of paper you use prevents waste from being created in the first place and also saves you money. Here are a few ways that you can use less around the office.

Adjust your settings before you print and send only exactly what you want to the printer.

Most programs make it easy by allowing you to highlight what you need, then click a box called "print selection." You can also specify a page number or range. Microsoft Word allows you to easily output two (or more) reduced-size pages on a single sheet. Always check your document in "Print Preview" view before printing. You can adjust margins and change spacing and font size to avoid that one last page with only a line or two of text.

Stop printing your e-mails.

Instead, save and file them electronic way. Not only will this save paper, but it will make e-mails easier to find and retrieve.

Print on both sides of the paper whenever possible.

In most programs this can be accomplished by clicking a box on the properties tab of the print window that appears when you hit "print." Another option is to have your printers and copiers set to default "double-sided" print. Talk to your IT department for instructions. If your printers and copiers do not have "double-sided" printing capability, then make sure that you add it to your specifications the next time you purchase a new one.



Instead of printing presentation materials and handouts, make them available in electronic form via e-mail or post them to your website.

This way, those who want them can print their own paper copies. When printing PowerPoint documents choose "handouts" and not "slides" from the print window. This will allow you to print up to six slides per page instead of using up an entire page for each slide.

Share memos, draft documents, and other internal documents via e-mail or save them to a shared drive for others to view and edit.

Try to print only final or official versions of documents and only as needed. Before you print, always ask yourself "Do I really need to print this." It is all too easy to go on printing out draft after draft of that fifty-page report only to pitch it into the recycling bin later that day.

Consider creating an office-wide printing policy. Include considerations such as those mentioned above, but only those that work for your office. Encourage paper waste reduction by keeping track of the amount of paper your office buys and announcing to employees on a quarterly basis.

For more waste reduction tips visit www.kansasgreenteams.org.

