

## 4.1 WASTE REDUCTION AND REUSE IDEAS

### PAPER

**Keep mailing lists current** by removing duplicate and out of date addresses.

**Reduce junk mail** to your business by writing to the Direct Marketing Association Mail Preference Service, PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008, and ask that your business be removed from their mailing lists. Sorting and handling unwanted mail is a waste of your company's time.

**Use e-mail, voice-mail and bulletin boards** to circulate company-wide messages and information.

**Save documents electronically** rather than printing out a hard copy

**Proof documents on your computer** before printing them or in lieu of printing them for proofing.



**Review the need for computer printouts** from time to time. It is all too easy to go on printing out a regular fifty-page report for the same ten people who have received it for the last two years. Do they need it?

**Use both sides of the paper.** Whenever possible use double sided photocopying and printing - and make sure that all staff know how to do this. Better still, set photocopiers and printers to default to double sided printing. Also be sure to require future purchases of copiers and printers to have double sided printing capability.

**Make scratch pads** from spare/used paper/outdated letterhead.

**Reuse envelopes** or use two-way envelopes.

**Reuse cardboard boxes** for shipping materials.

**Donate unused books, magazines, and journals** to local organizations, literacy programs, hospitals, or schools.

### PACKAGING

**Repair and reuse pallets** or return them to your vendor.



**Reuse newspaper and shredding** as packaging/shipping material.

**Reuse foam packing peanuts**, bubble wrap, and other packing materials.

**If your business is a retail establishment**, consider offering an incentive to customers for bringing back and reusing items like shopping/grocery bags, drink cups, containers, etc... rather than receiving new ones.

**Talk with vendors** to reduce the amount of packaging used.

**Have shipments delivered** in returnable and/or recyclable containers.

**Consider returning cardboard boxes and foam packing material** to suppliers or shipping companies for reuse.

**Minimize the packaging** used in shipping your own products.

# OFFICE SUPPLIES

**Reuse binders, folders, hanging file dividers** and other storage items

**Eliminate disposables** – Encourage the use of reusable coffee cups, utensils and dishes in your kitchen or lunchroom and when arranging food for meetings or conferences, try to ensure that disposables are not used.



**Rent equipment** that is only used occasionally.

**Use rechargeable batteries.**

**Use less toxic products** for cleaning, inks and paints.

**Use products that are more durable, higher quality, recyclable or reusable.**



**Compost organic food waste** using an in-office vermicompost bin system, or a compost bin if there is space outside.

**Sell or give old or unused furniture and equipment** to other businesses, employees or charitable organizations.

**Use reusable furnace or air conditioner filters.**

**Consider using a material or waste exchange** for large quantities of reusable materials.

**Set up an area where employees can exchange items** they no longer need.

## COMPUTERS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Try to repair equipment** before having it replaced and establish regular maintenance check-ups for frequently used pieces of equipment to extend their life (copiers, fax machines, computers, etc...)

**Consider purchasing refurbished office equipment and furniture.**

## PURCHASING

**Purchase products with a minimal amount of packaging.**

**For materials you use a lot of (e.g. copy paper), order materials and supplies in bulk** and choose recycled content and environmentally preferable products when possible.

**Avoid excess.** For items you use less often, order only what you need.

**Purchase remanufactured ink and toner cartridges** and return them to the supplier for remanufacture.

**Purchase items that you know you can recycle** and that include the most recycled content.

