



the professional association for design

AIGA Charlotte

## AIGA CHARLOTTE'S BE GREEN AT WORK TIPS

### :: PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE ::

#### > Explore the AIGA Center for Sustainable Design [sustainability.aiga.org](http://sustainability.aiga.org)

The AIGA Center for Sustainable Design is dedicated to providing designers with practical information, including case studies, news articles, discourse and resources, relevant to sustainable business practice.

AIGA Center for Sustainable Design's Eleven questions to ask before you design, specify or buy anything:

- 1 Do we need it? Can we live without it?
- 2 Is the project designed to minimize waste?
- 3 Can it be smaller, lighter or made from fewer materials?
- 4 Is it designed to be durable or multi-functional?
- 5 Does it use renewable resources?
- 6 Is reuse practical and encouraged?
- 7 Are the product and packaging refillable, recyclable or repairable?
- 8 Is it made with post-consumer recycled or reclaimed materials and how much?
- 9 Are the materials available in a less toxic form? Can it be made with less toxic materials?
- 10 Is it available from a socially and environmentally responsible company?
- 11 Is it made locally?

#### > Adopt the Designers Accord [www.designersaccord.org](http://www.designersaccord.org) (AIGA, Cumulus, and the IDSA endorse the Designers Accord)

The Designers Accord is a global coalition of designers, educators, researchers, engineers, and corporate leaders, working together to create positive environmental and social impact.

### :: MAKE ECO-PAPER CHOICES ::

#### > Use Recycled Paper

Select either a 100 percent post-consumer waste (PCW), processed chlorine free (PCF), uncoated, FSC certified sheet made with renewable energy (ie wind, geothermal, solar, etc) or treeless paper made with bamboo, hemp and/or kenaf if readily available locally. Did you know that the average US worker uses 12,000 sheets of paper per year?

#### > Select Papers from Mills Who Care

**Mohawk** paper uses 100% Windpower to manufacture their paper and in 2007 received EPA's "Green Power Partner of the Year" award.

**Neenah** paper's innovative green initiatives have established it as the industry leader in environmentally responsible business and manufacturing policies and practices.

**New Leaf Paper** leads the paper industry in the development and distribution of environmentally superior printing and office papers.

**Sappi** paper strives for continuous environmental improvement by using integrated management systems; benchmarking to globally recognized standards and monitoring its progress.

**Domtar** EarthChoice® is the largest family of environmentally responsible papers ever assembled.

**Finch** paper foresters manage more than 161,000 acres of FSC- and SFI-certified forestland owned by the highly respected environmental conservation organization The Nature Conservancy, and approximately 24,000 acres of similarly certified forests owned by other private landowners in New York's famed Adirondack Region.

#### > Use Tree Free

Paper can be made from just about anything: Cotton (Crane's, Neenah), sugar cane (Bugasse paper-Neenah), coconut husks, mango leaves, jute/straw, denim, hemp, cigar, coffee or even poo paper ([www.poopoopaper.com](http://www.poopoopaper.com) made from elephant dung). They also make poo paper out of elk, kangaroo and wallaby poo. You really CAN make paper out of anything.

#### > Certifications/Definitions

**FSC** (Forrest Stewardship Council) ensures that the paper meets the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards for responsible forest management and responsible use of forest resources. [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)  
(Charlotte FSC Certified Printers are Belk Printing, Cadmus, Classic Graphics Inc., Metrographics and Letter-Perfect Inc.)

**SFI** (The Sustainable Forestry Initiative) program is based on the premise that responsible environmental behavior and sound business decisions can co-exist. [www.aboutsfi.org](http://www.aboutsfi.org)

**PEFC** (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) The PEFC is committed to promoting sustainable forest management through independent third party forest certification. [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)

**GREEN SEAL CERTIFIED** Signifies that all recycled papers are made with a minimum of 30% post consumer fiber and that mill processes, including packaging, are environmentally preferable. [www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)

**PROCESSED CHLORINE FREE** Assurance that papers made with 100% post consumer recycled fiber are made without the use of chlorine or chlorine chemistry.



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**GREEN-E CERTIFIED** Green-e identifies products made with certified renewable energy, including but not limited to wind power, solar power, low impact hydropower, and biomass. [www.green-e.org](http://www.green-e.org)

**CARBON NEUTRAL** Neenah Paper is a member of the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX®), the world's first and North America's only voluntary and legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction and trading system.

**WINDPOWER PAPER** As of June 1, 2007, Mohawk Fine Papers has increased its purchase of wind-generated electricity RECs from 60,000,000 kWh to 100,000,000 kWh annually.

**POST-CONSUMER WASTE (PCW)** Waste collected after the consumer has used and disposed of it.

**RECYCLED PAPER** Paper made from old paper that has been de-inked and processed chemically.

**SOY INK** An alternative to petroleum based ink that contains lower levels of VOCs and is biodegradable.

## :: REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT IN YOUR DAILY OPERATIONS ::

### > Reduce Paper Consumption

To reduce paper consumption, develop more comprehensive and systematic digital files for record-keeping, require two-sided printing for in-house materials; and encourage electronic communication over print communication. Avoid unnecessary photocopying and reuse packaging for shipping. Use old letterhead and paper scraps for sketching and note pads. Stop junk mail and multiple copies of catalogs. Check out [catalogchoice.org](http://catalogchoice.org) and [www.forestethics.org](http://www.forestethics.org).

### > Buy Green and Local

Tell suppliers that you're interested in sustainable products and set specific goals for buying recycled, refurbished, or used. Talk to suppliers about alternatives to toxics, and make sure you properly dispose of the ones you can't avoid using. Consider the petroleum it takes to ship and receive products, try to buy local when possible. Evaluate the impact of products you buy or sell, and find ways to mitigate those impacts. Choose suppliers who take back packaging for reuse.

### > Use Remanufactured Toner Cartridges

Remanufactured (recycled) toner cartridges reduce the energy use and waste requirements created by new toner cartridges and can normally be acquired for 20 to 40 percent less than the cost of a new cartridge. Or you can refill computer ink cartridges rather than add them to the landfill.

### > Dispose Responsibly

Get as much as possible from office equipment and computers, but when they must be disposed of, consider ecologically-responsible disposal services. There are companies, such as Petaluma, Calif.-based Ecohaul, that will, for a fee, remove, refurbish and, short of that, properly dispose of old office equipment and supplies.

### > Consider the Commute

American workers spend an average of 47 hours per year commuting through rush hour traffic. This adds up to 3.7 billion hours and 23 billion gallons of gas wasted in traffic each year. Carpool, walk, bike, or take public transportation whenever possible. Have your company provide transit passes to employees who take the bus or subway and bike racks for cyclists. Possibly, let workers telecommute. Curb business travel. Teleconference instead of traveling. For must-go trips, keep track of the miles driven and flown and buy "carbon offsets" from a nonprofit like [Carbonfund.org](http://Carbonfund.org) to make up for the greenhouse gas emissions.

### > Bring Your Lunch

Bringing lunch to work in reusable containers is likely the greenest (and healthiest) way to eat at work. Getting delivery and takeout almost inevitably ends with a miniature mountain of packaging waste. If you do order delivery, join coworkers in placing a large order (more efficient than many separate ones). Also, bring in a reusable plate, utensils, and napkins. If you do go out for lunch, try biking or walking instead of driving.

### > Four Day Work Weeks

Trade shifts and job duties so that you can work four long days instead of five short ones.

## :: GREEN YOUR SPACE WHERE YOU SPEND 8-10 HOURS A DAY ::

### > Procure Less Hazardous Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies

Inventory chemical products used by both the staff and contract cleaning services; make sure they are all necessary; Seek alternative products with less hazardous ingredients (possible by requesting a Materials Safety Data Sheet).

### > Supplies

Pens and pencils can also be made of recycled materials, and refillable pens and markers are preferable to disposable ones. Use biodegradable soaps and recycled paper or cloth towels in the bathroom and kitchen. Buy in bulk so that shipping and packaging waste are reduced, and reuse the shipping boxes. Switch to Fair Trade Certified™ organic coffee and tea. Invest in reusable plates, cups, and utensils. Use recycled fiber padded envelopes, popcorn, and shredded newspaper for shipping. Some vendors will take back bubble wrap or whatever packing materials that you cannot use.

### > Increasing Waste Recycling

Make sure your office recycles paper, aluminum, glass, and plastic. If your building does not already offer the service, look for an independent recycling firm that can come and pick up your office recyclables on a weekly or biweekly basis. If this isn't an option in your area, work with individuals in your office to encourage people to take their recyclables home with them to put in their own residential curbside recycling.



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**> Start An Office Compost Program**

You can keep a sealed compost container in your office kitchen and individual staff members take turns taking the compost home to add to their own compost piles. You can also chip in to get a worm composter for your office kitchen. Worm composting is an incredibly efficient way to convert kitchen scraps into nutrient rich compost for your garden. Your plants will thrive with this all natural compost.

**> Replace Incandescent Bulbs with Compact Fluorescents (CFLs - which can now be recycled at Home Depot)**

Given recent rapid advances in lighting technology, upgrading lighting systems that are less than ten years old often reduces electrical use by twenty to forty percent and can be very cost-effective. By replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents, lighting efficiencies substantially reduced the energy required for air conditioning since less waste heat is generated.

**> Get an Energy Audit**

Most local utilities and offer businesses free on-site consultations on how they can reduce usage and save money. If your office rents its space, encourage your landlord to do the audit and require it as a condition in your next lease negotiation. When evaluating older and less energy-efficient HVAC systems, consider waiting until the energy consumed in building, shipping and installing a new unit is greater than the difference in the efficiency of that unit over the remaining lifetime of the existing unit. Frequent suggestions: Improve insulation, make windows airtight and install timers to turn lights off automatically.

**> Purchase Green Electricity**

Investigate wind-power for all electric use onsite. This involves purchasing offset amounts that the local utility must add to the energy grid equivalent to the amount of electricity you use. Turn off equipment when it's not being used. This can reduce the energy used by 25 percent; turning off the computers at the end of the day can save an additional 50 percent.

**> Conserve Water**

Install low flow bathroom fixtures and replace bottled water with filtered potable municipal water. Don't let taps drip.

**> Get On The Roof**

Installation of a green roof will provide some CO2 conversation, reducing heat gain in the summer and heat loss in the winter. Solar panels perform similar function and generate electricity at the same time. Rooftop solar water heaters can assist tremendously with hot water needs.

**> Utilize Low Toxicity Construction Materials**

When remodeling or painting, use materials with low VOC (Volatile organic compounds - are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids. VOCs include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects) content and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification.

**> Furniture**

Start with good furniture, good lighting, and good air. Furniture can be manufactured from recycled materials as well as recyclable. Herman-Miller and Steelcase are two groundbreaking companies that have adopted the Cradle-to-Cradle protocol for many of their office chairs.

**:: CHECK YOUR WEIGHT ::**

**> Your Carbon Footprint**

The only way to know whether or not you are making improvements is to measure progress. In addition to auditing your business operations, consult a carbon calculator to determine your own carbon footprint. Some websites to help you calculate: [www.carboncounter.org](http://www.carboncounter.org), [www.carbonfund.org](http://www.carbonfund.org), [www.thenatureconservancy.com](http://www.thenatureconservancy.com) and [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org).

**> Purchase Carbon Offsets**

Carbon offsets allow you take action on global warming now. Offsetting your carbon footprint will support greenhouse gas reduction projects and hasten the transition to a clean energy future.

**CarbonCool** [aiga.org/onlinestore/ibo/orders/](http://aiga.org/onlinestore/ibo/orders/)

CarbonCool, AIGA's unique carbon offset program for designers and their studios. You can offset your individual lifestyle, your family's lifestyle, the impact of your studio or even a single flight.

**Carbonfund** [carbonfund.org](http://carbonfund.org)

Carbonfund is leading the fight against global climate change, making it easy and affordable for any individual, business or organization to eliminate their climate impact and hastening the transformation to a clean energy future



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#### :: ECO BOOKMARKOLLES ::

**sustainability.aiga.org** Provides designers with a wide range of information regarding sustainable business practice  
**designersaccord.org** Global coalition working together to create positive environmental and social impact  
**core77.com** Current pulse on the design community, with strong focus on social and environmental change  
**treehugger.com** Witty green news on culture, technology, design, with lots of recommendations and product info  
**worldchanging.com** Current and incisive articles on environmental and social issues  
**thegreenguide.com** National Geographic's online magazine featuring green living tips, product reviews, and environmental health news  
**grist.org** Online magazine that provides environmental news topics with humor  
**coopamerica.org** National nonprofit consumer organization, promoting environmental sustainability, social justice, and economic justice  
**greenatworkmag.com** Magazine dedicated to telling the stories of ecological pioneers, products and systems  
**earth911.org** US and Canada's largest online clearinghouse of recycling information  
**thegreenoffice.com** Online retailer of recycled, environmentally friendly, and sustainable business products, school supplies and paper  
**greenbiz.com** Repository of articles and practical tools for building the business case and taking action on the environment  
**environmentalpaper.org** Pulp and paper industry organizations supporting environmentally sustainable transformations  
**greenpressinitiative.org** Book and newspaper industries working together to better understand their impacts environment  
**ecofabulous.blogs.com** Newest to market eco-chic items  
**inhabitat.com** Cutting edge news on fashionable eco-architecture and eco-home design  
**goodmagazine.com** Integrated media platform for people who want to live well and do good  
**StoryofStuff.com** 20-minute animations of our consumerist society  
**mygreenbrand.com** Helps companies create more sustainable innovative products/services by using sustainable design processes  
**green2consulting.com** Engages management and employees to develop and implement a strong sustainability policy  
**greenorder.com** Helps companies maximize the value of sustainability  
**catalogchoice.org** Free service that helps you decline paper catalogs you no longer wish to receive

#### :: GREEN READING ::

**Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things** by William McDonough and Michael Braungart  
**Worldchanging: A User's Guide for the 21st Century** Edited by Alex Steffen  
**Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change** by Victor Papanek  
**Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature** by Janine M. Benyus