

# Sustainable Practices in the Law Office

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Oregon Lawyers for a Sustainable Future has created this checklist to assist the law office in (1) assessing its current practices and (2) considering new practices that might be adopted.

## GENERAL

- A sustainability policy has been adopted by the firm.
- Employees have been educated about portions of this policy that relate to their work, and this education is part of new employee training.
- Discussions have been held with a representative of the building owner regarding the OLSF law office tool "Best Practices of Office Building Management."

## RECYCLING

- Desk-side recycling boxes are at each workstation.
- Containers are available for bottles, cans, newspapers, magazines, and cardboard, and a procedure has been established for their recycling.
- A procedure has been established for recycling some items not accepted by the garbage hauler, such as Tyvek envelopes, batteries, and plastic bags.

## PAPER REDUCTION

- Office policy states that all copy and print jobs should be double sided unless otherwise specified.
- Copiers and printers have an automatic duplex option.
- Office policy on data and document storage is intended to minimize the use of paper.
- Office policy on court and agency filing procedures favors using the least paper that courts allow.
- Employees are educated to save paper printed on one side, and to use it for printing drafts, making note pads, or other purpose.
- Faxes are received and routed electronically.
- Documents are processed electronically, using scan option on copier when appropriate, rather than printing hard copies.
- Letter-sized paper, files, and pouches have replaced legal-sized items.
- Procedures are in place for keeping mailing lists up-to-date so as not to waste paper.
- Office policy encourages sharing of phone and reference books (e.g., dictionaries, statutes) or use of online sources.
- Firm is undertaking the ABA Climate-Challenge "best practices" for paper management.

## PURCHASING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

- Copy/printer paper and file folders have a minimum of 30% post-consumer recycled content.
- Office policy gives preference for products with recycled content whenever available at a cost of up to 15% more than the same item without recycled content.
- Letterhead, envelopes, and legal pads have 100% post-consumer recycled content.
- Paper towels have 100% post-consumer recycled content.
- Office policy gives preference for Energy Star office equipment.
- Coffee is organic and shade grown.
- Coffee, sugar, creamer, salt, and pepper are purchased in bulk rather than in single-serving containers.
- Suppliers have been notified about firm's purchasing policy.

### **PREFERRING SUSTAINABLE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

- Soy-based ink is specified for outsourced print jobs.
- Office policy encourages the use of lunch caterers that minimize disposables and purchase locally grown, organic food.
- Office policy encourages personnel traveling on business to rent fuel-efficient cars.
- Office policy encourages hiring event planners who have expertise in sustainable events.

### **ELIMINATING DISPOSABLES**

- Durable plates, cups, glasses, and utensils are provided in kitchen and conference rooms.
- Pitchers with tap water, rather than bottled water, are provided in conference rooms. Chilled tap water is available in the kitchens.

### **REUSING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

- An internal reuse center has been established for supplies such as binders, file folders, etc.
- Remanufactured cartridges for laser printers are purchased, and old cartridges are sent out for reuse.
- Old office equipment, furniture, and supplies are sold or donated for reuse.

### **REDUCING TOXIC PRODUCTS**

- Unbleached paper towels and napkins are purchased for at least 50% of firm supply.
- Kitchen cleaners of low toxicity and high biodegradability are purchased.

### **REDUCING ENERGY**

- Office policy calls for individual computers and printers to be turned off at the end of each day.
- Procedures are in place for shared copy machines and printers to be turned off, or put in standby mode, at the end of each day.
- Timers have been installed, or procedures are in place, for turning off lights.
- Office policy encourages reducing (a) the need for business travel, through teleconferencing and other strategies, and (b) carbon emissions of required business travel.
- Firm is participating in the ABA Climate-Challenge Energy Star program to reduce energy (or electricity, if a tenant,) by 10 percent.

### **PROVIDING COMMUTER INCENTIVES**

- A subsidy of at least 50% is provided for bus passes.
- Monetary incentives are provided for bike commuters.
- Employees are allowed to charge firm for cab fare when working beyond public transportation commute times.
- Firm does not provide free parking for any personnel.
- Firm has purchased one or more car-sharing memberships.

### **OTHER**

- If firm has a workplace giving program, employees have the option of giving through Earth Share or other program supporting environmental nonprofits.
- Educational speakers on sustainability are invited and promoted as a part of firm training.



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