

Pine State Service Going Green as a Company Top 30 Project Priority List

1. Make a Written List of potential energy wasting activities and potential polluting of the environment

We will start by taking a look at our current business practices of the areas in which we can do better about wasting energy and polluting the environment

2. Start with an Energy Audit

We want to know our carbon footprint so we have a baseline for future progress.

Audits may be done by local utilities, energy efficiency experts, or consultants, who can evaluate our energy use and punch up the numbers, so we can see where we can save money and as a result, help the environment

After analyzing our specific needs and use of lighting, heating, air conditioning, machinery, and office equipment (including computers) to determine energy efficiency, we can seek lower-cost solutions, change bad habits, and adopt new company-wide business policies to decrease our energy output.

3. Become an Eco-Friendly Shopper

Environmental Preferable Purchasing [EPP] as it's called, means buying products with a reduced negative effect on the environment compared to other products that serve the same purpose

Ex: Buying recycled paper vs. newly created paper

There are two types of recycled products we will find. Post-consumer recycled products which are those that have been used by consumers and then recycled, and post-manufactured recycled, which is waste created by a manufacturing process that is subsequently used as a constituent in another manufacturing process.

Look for products that meet Green Seal Standards and we can also visit www.greenseal.org

We can also be a more environmentally wise shopper by:

1. Patronizing companies that feature green business practices
2. Shop locally to minimize long distance shipping
3. Look for products that are more durable and will last longer
4. Select products that do not drain energy or waste water, such as Energy Star appliances
5. Attempt to reuse what we have before buying something new
6. Buy products from suppliers who do not use excessive non-biodegradable packaging.
7. Reuse shipping materials.

When we shop in a brick and mortar store, take along our own cloth bags rather than use the paper or plastic bags provided by the store.

Businesses routinely buy at least 30 percent more supplies and equipment than they actually need, and this does not include excess inventory so determine where we can avoid overbuying.

4. Start an Office recycling Program

An office committed to recycling is a very basic green step we can take to enhance our commitment to the environment

Ex: Use mugs and cups that can be cleaned vs. throw away paper and Styrofoam cups for water and coffee.

The first step is identifying what is recyclable, such as newspapers, office paper, glass and plastic bottles, aluminum cans and cardboard boxes.

The next step is to find a local recycling pickup service.

Computer cartridges and technical equipment usually requires separate recycling efforts and companies

A good place to find recyclers is www.recyclingcenters.org

Next, we'll need to find a place within our offices in which to collect these items. Bins for paper, plastic, bottles and cans are a good way to start.

5. Institute a Green Purchasing Policy

Since everything we buy can't be green, we need to balance some conventional purchasing with green criteria

We can visit www.thegreenoffice.com to learn about thousands of office products that are carefully evaluated for their "greenness"

Compostable and biodegradable products are those that have reduced chemical content with respect to competitive products and those that have earned legitimate third-party certification.

We'll need to determine where we're going to shop. By using online office supply businesses, we can avoid fuel going from shop to shop. Some big box office stores are just beginning to carry green products

6. Use Green Office Supplies

We should be looking for items made from recyclable materials and ones that are more energy-efficient.

Seventh Generation at www.sevengeneration.com and Method at www.methodhome.com are excellent places to look for such products.

There are more office items that could be greener such as nontoxic water based markers, solar calculators, and long-life, refillable pens made from recyclable plastics and other materials

Utilize small incentives, such as an afternoon off or a free lunch, for the person who comes up with the most eco-friendly office supplies.

The goal is to break old buying habits and instill new ones, which in time will become routine.

7. Switch to Energy-Efficient Lighting

There are two types of light bulbs that are more energy-efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs: light-emitting diodes [LEDs] and compact fluorescent lamps [CFLs]

Compact Fluorescent Tubes [CFTs] are the fluorescent versions of CFLs. A CFL or CFT is simply a gas-filled tube with an electronic ballast.

Of course, in addition to using lower-energy lighting options, we can further reduce costing by using light sensors.

8. Upgrade and Maintain Our HVAC System

The second aspect of greener climate control can be achieved with proper maintenance of our current HVAC systems because it ensures the best chance to have our equipment running at peak efficiency.

A maintenance checkup should include:

1. Check that all HVAC controls work properly
2. Lubricate the motors and any moving parts
3. Make sure all electrical connections are tight
4. Check to make sure the condensate drain is not blocked up
5. Clean evaporator and condenser air conditioning coils
6. For heating systems: check all gas or oil connections, gas pressure, burner combustion, and heat exchangers to assure they're working properly

We can check that proper settings on thermostats are being maintained on a regular basis and have in our policy manual what those typical settings should be.

Install programmable thermostats.

Seal off vents and radiation in areas that are unused.

With any system, we should pay attention to the overuse of air conditioning where fans and opening windows [when available] can be substituted.

Insulating the heated and cooled area well and sealing leaks and cracks that allow air infiltration will lessen both our heating and cooling bills.

9. Go with Active Solar

We need to find out if we can pre-heat our domestic hot water and the hot water heating systems to lower our own energy costs and our carbon footprint.

The goal is to maximize “free” energy in a smart way.

We want to research what government and utility money exists to help us minimize the cost

10. Start a “Save Water” Program

Here are a few water-saving suggestions for business in general:

1. Don't empty the water cooler or any other water into a drain if we can use that water for another purpose such as watering plants or cleaning our windows.
2. If we have a dishwasher in our company kitchen wait till it's fills up to run it
3. Make sure all pipes in our facility are checked to ensure that we do not have leaks.
4. Repair all dripping faucets.
5. Install a recirculation line and pump so we don not have wait for warm or hot water
6. Make sure toilet tanks are not leaking
7. Install faucet aerators and low-flow toilets.
8. Insulate exposed piping
9. Seek out steam cleaning when cleaning carpets
10. Support local initiatives that save or reuse water in our community
11. Promote water-saving suggestions to our customers
12. When buying new appliances look for water-efficient models

11. Install a Water Filtration System

Did we know that Americans use over 200 billion gallons of water per day? We also use 10billion plastic water bottles each year many of which end up in t landfills and may actually have containments from the containers themselves

With these numbers in mind, we ay want to consider a water filtrations system for our place of business. It helps the environment and the health of our employees.

Look for zero-waste filters that recycle what is typically wasted water with other osmosis systems.

It's advisable although not essential that we have our water analyzed to give we an idea of what is coming into our facility. We can then better purchase the right type of filter and location for them.

There are even filters for individual faucets.

Of course, for many offices, the best option is a bottle-less water cooler, which can replace those massive water bottles while purifying and dispending clean water. These point-of-use filters systems allow we to control water temperature while allowing employees to continue the tradition of gathering around the water cooler. Vertex is one place to look bottle-less water coolers go to www.vertexwater.com

Water filters can save our staff money they would have spent on bottled water and ensure that we are contributing to cleaner water and sending less waste to landfills.

12. Use Indoor Plants as Natural Air Filters

Plants can serve a very useful purpose as natural air filters.

Our green campaign can improve air quality by removing many indoor pollutants, including those from varnish and other laminates finishes, carpet particles and fibers, formaldehyde, and toxins from chemical cleaners and even from high-tech gadgets.

We'll need to look for plant that require low maintenance and will do well with artificial (low) lighting.

Some of the better plant choices for indoor use as office air cleaners include:

1. Areca Pam
2. Boston Fern
3. Cast Iron Plant
4. Dracaena
5. English Ivy
6. Golden Pothos
7. Hoya
8. Peace Lilly
9. Philodendron
10. Snake Plants
11. Spider Plants
12. Weeping Fig

According to researchers, we should have at least one potted plant for every 100 sq. ft. floor space.

Note: Terra Cotta clay pots help avoid over watering

13. Start a Paper Waste Prevention Program

Offices are notorious for wasting huge amounts of paper. While recycling paper is a marvelous idea, it is important to stop wasting paper. That's because, along with the concerns about diminishing forests, paper requires a considerable amount of energy to produce.

Two-sided printing should become standard protocol, especially for in-house materials. A significant step toward a paperless office is by encouraging electronic memos.

While there will always be a need for some hard copies in any office, such as legal documents, contracts, and tax information wherever paper use can be limited should be included on the list.

Another way to go greener with paper is to ship with an environmental mindset. This means purchasing paper with a high percentage of post-consumer recycled content instead of paper from 100 percent virgin pulp.

Once we get into the habit of purchasing more environmentally sound paper, spread the word by mentioning on our printed documents that our business uses eco-friendly paper.

Tip: Shredded paper makes an excellent packing material for shipments

14. Switch to Energy-Efficient Computer Use

One great step is to switch our computer to sleep mode for any periods of inactivity. The system then “awakens” with a touch of a key or the mouse.

Of course, we can also make sure that all business computers are shut off overnight, including the monitors, which is an obvious way to save energy. We probably have numerous programs running on our computer at one time which is slowing down our system and utilizing more energy.

Also, opting for laptops over desktops can also increase energy savings as they use less power when upgrading the computer system.

Once it's time to buy replacement computers, we'll want to find a place to donate our current computer equipment so it avoids becoming part the mass of landfill.

15. When Buying New Computers, Buy Greener Models

Today's newer models are more environmentally efficient and use lead-free components, while avoiding energy-wasting power supplies and souped-up graphics cards. They also come with LCD monitors which use less power than their CRT counterparts.

The first step we can take when embarking on our search is to look for Energy Star-compliant computers and monitors when looking to upgrade.

We want to look for the new breed of eco-friendly computers that use less than 75 watts while in use, less than 50 watts while idle and 4 watts in sleep mode. When looking at laptops, we should look for models that use less than 35 watts when in use, less than 15 watts while ideal and 2 watts when in sleep mode.

Here are some features we may want to research or ask about:

1. Variable CPU fans with heat sinks can limit heat from the CPU and keep our power supply cooler
2. Lead-free circuitry and hard drives are available from Samsung, Seagate and other manufacturers.

Lead-free DVD/CD drives are also available.

16. Quick Tip: Switch to E-Signatures

One of the roadblocks to the paperless office is documents that need to be signed. So, we end up printing out tons of paper annually simply because we need to sign on the dotted line.

If we have ever signed on an electronic signature pad when paying by credit card we know what electronic signatures are. Using the right software, our signature can appear on any type of document and then be e-mailed accordingly.

DocuSign, the leading web-based electronic signature company at www.docusign.com notes on their website that 10 million pages saved equals roughly:

1. 2,500 trees
2. 56,000 gallons of oil
3. 450 cubic yards of landfill space
4. 585, 000 kilowatts of energy
5. 1.04 million gallons of water

Speak to the bank about check scanning so the money is deposited directly and driving to make deposits and old checks can be shredded and recycled

FYI, direct deposit is also a great way to avoid printing paper. If we are not already doing so, join the thousands of companies that are paying employees by direct deposit. We want to talk to ADP and let them know we are "Going Green" so what can we do to reduce our environmental impact on printing and waste of fuel and transport.

We'll also find a variety of signature pads that work with SigPlus software tools by checking out Topaz Systems at www.topazsystems.com.

17. Share Our Waste

By developing relationships with other businesses, we can lower their costs while lowering our carbon footprint by putting our unused items to work for another business,

The point is that at each level a use should be found for what was otherwise is seen as waste.

Part of our initiative to go greener should involve connecting with other businesses and determining how we can utilize resources

Also, remember, one company's garbage is another company's gold!

18. Work With Green Vendors and Suppliers

Here are some criteria to consider:

1. Does the vendor supplier have a recycling and/or reuse policy in place?
2. Does the vendor-supplier have an energy reduction policy in place?
3. Are the vendor-suppliers' products made from recyclable materials?
4. Does the vendor-supplier practice energy conservation at their business site?
5. Are toxic or environmentally unfriendly chemicals used in their manufacture of the product or in the product itself?
6. Does the vendor-supplier use environmentally friendly sustainable shipping materials?
7. Does the vendor supplier utilize parts and products shipped from long distances that could otherwise be found locally?
8. Is the vendor-supplier within 500 miles of our business? 100 miles?
9. Does the vendor-supplier donate money and/or time to sustainable initiatives and organizations? Do they have an involvement in social or environmental group of activities? Does the vendor-supplier pay employees a living wage and do they have any benefits?

Quality and price of merchandise are always a concern when working with a vendor or supplier, even a green one.

19. Quick Tip: Avoid Shipping Air [How can we do this at PSS?]

Most often, after we receive products and packages, the truck or van then returns to the warehouse, distribution center, or factory with no contents, they are "Shipping Air"

We want to combine our efforts on shipping stuff to the field staff and the suppliers to avoid “Shipping Air”

The more that two-way shipping replaces one-way distribution, the fewer vehicles need to be utilized.

20. Make the Switch to Flex Fuel or Hybrid Cars, Vans, and Trucks

Our first step is to establish our baseline for fuel consumption by our fleet currently.

With this knowledge, we can make smart decisions on the vehicles our business has today. It may make sense to consider investing in low-emission, hybrid, or flex fuel cars, vans, and trucks.

Vehicles with advanced “clean” diesel engines are also becoming more available and these diesel fuel vehicles are not only cleaner burning they provide superior fuel economy.

21. Think Green Tires

First, one of the simplest steps in tire maintenance is keeping our tires inflated at the proper pressure. It helps the environment because each vehicle that drives 10,000 miles annually on under-inflated tires is using an extra 120 gallons of gas every year.

The other side of the green tire equations is what happens to our tires when they are put out to pasture. Tire can now be recycled into floor mats, planters, safety materials for playgrounds, washers for faucets, soles for shoes and sneakers, safety floor covering, tire swings, and various other products.

Additionally, we can now buy reconstructed and remolded tires. Check out Green Diamond Tires Company at www.greendiamondtire.com

22. Change the Coffee Culture in Our Office

We need a “Greener coffee culture” where we can make a dent in the environmental woes and get our employees to continue thinking green.

First, opt for brewing in our company kitchen or wherever employees go (in-house) for snacks and or beverages. Doing so allows our staffers to bring their own cups or mugs, rinse them out after drinking and reuse them rather than using and disposing of Styrofoam or cardboard cups on a daily basis.

If we insist on dropping by Starbucks, bring our own cup or mug. Some companies even offer a slight discount.

Next, opt for an energy-efficient [Energy Star] coffee maker. Look for models that provide filter less brewing while using less energy. If we are in need of filters, we can buy durable, reusable stainless steel filters

We can also shop for a wide range of organically grown coffees and try a few until we find one that suits the majority of tastes in our office.

23. Create a Green Team

One of the best ways to transition a business to be “environmentally proactive” is to establish a green team. With Support and guidance by management, a green team can research and report on various means of improving sustainability within a company.

The key to a successful green team is utilizing members in their area of expertise within the company.

Company-wide incentives can be put into place if participation is sluggish or enthusiasm is waning.

One way to generate interest is to initiate a company-wide survey, which to see what ideas they have on going green and who wants to volunteer to be on the green team

An introductory meeting should take place, at which time everyone can list some common goals. Management should take part in at least the initial meeting to get the ball rolling, show support, and let it be known there is room in the budget to make modifications but not every one of the suggesting by the green team’s finding can be acted on do to budget and time restraints.

At the initial meeting we should cover:

1. Announce who the team leader is
2. Appoint a secretary
3. Discuss overall goals such as creating a “Sustainability Plan”
4. Discuss finances
5. Discuss and list some general areas in which the company could become more sustainable such as reducing waste, conserving energy and water, moving toward sustainable purchasing practices and using alternative means of transportation
6. Discuss responsibilities of team members to research and report their findings

7. Divide responsibilities so each member knows which area they will cover
8. Determine some rough deadlines for reporting on possible solutions
9. Develop a meeting schedule and determine a regular meeting place
10. Determine the best means of communication between members, which will typically be electronic
11. Discuss any training that might be of benefit to the team such as Webinars, seminars, or books everyone should read.
12. Finally, we want to determine when the team or team leader will discuss the proposed changes with management so they can be prioritized, budgeted for and brought to fruition.

24. Produce a Sustainability Report

This Master Project List, the Top 30 List and the Top Five #1 List of “PSS Going Green” is our sustainability report.

It’s designed to change and grow with our company over time.

Additionally, a sustainability report is a good marketing tool, showing our greener side.

It’s important not only to talk about what we’re doing well and what we’ve accomplished, but also talk about what we’re not doing well yet. That’s a critical part of such a report.

Consumers can see firsthand what we are doing, and they have so much more respect for we when we’re willing to admit that we made a mistake or that we need to make specific changes.

A sustainability report should establish our core values and include a decision making principles that adhere to such values.

There are some other items below that may also be considered as we progress:

1. An overview of our business activities and business principles
2. Our mission statement
3. Our current energy needs a resources used
4. An outline of our production process
5. Our environmental strategies
6. Our adherence to government regulations
7. Our current sustainable use of raw materials
8. Our current carbon footprint
9. Life cycle analysis for our products [aka cradle to grave as it’s sometimes called].
10. Upcoming plans and goals for the next 1, 3 and even 10 years

11. How we plan to go about reaching our goals
12. Current sustainability problems
13. Means of addressing sustainability problems
14. Our social and community activities
15. Forthcoming initiatives within the community
16. Risk management plans
17. Charts, graphs, graphics, and any data to support and substantiate our plans

It is not uncommon to acknowledge that our business is new at addressing ecological issues as a high-priority area of concern. Conversely, we may have been thinking and acting in a sustainable manner for years and only now are realizing the impact of our work. In this case, we can explain what we have been doing and possibly include some specific examples and add how we plan to continue and build on that.

25. Use Green Marketing and Promotion

Once our company is on the path of being green there are three primary components to green marketing and promotions. They are:

1. Letting people know what we are doing to help benefit the planet
2. Marketing green products and services
3. Using green methods to achieve the first two

Green practices need to follow all the way through from production to packaging to sales to marketing.

Ex: Sell high-efficiency energy saving equipment and produce glossy marketing pieces that dump chemicals down our drains and kill forests

To learn more about environmentally friendly marketing visit www.enviromedia.com and see what one marketing company is doing to promote the practice of "green marketing"

Once we reach the point of having greener products through the entire life cycle and our business is operating in a sustainable manner within cost-effective means, we can start letting the media know with electronic press releases and promoting word of mouth campaigns.

We can focus on environmentally conscious, green consumers, but that is often preaching to the choir. Therefore, we will more likely want to extend our efforts to a mainstream market, many of whom are besieged by such marketing and need

to know why they should believe we are truly green, unlike our greenwashing competitor.

26. Embrace Word-Of-Mouth Marketing

One of the best ways of reaching customers is through other customers. An unbiased testimonial from a friend or will bring us other new customers.

There are many ways to start the ball rolling, especially on the internet, where one person can reach out to millions on a blog, in a chat room, or a discussion board, or through instant messaging with friends and family members. Encouraging this chain of communication is an inexpensive, environmentally friendly means of word-of-mouth marketing.

Public speaking presentations can also start the ball rolling. So, be on the lookout for public speaking opportunities to spread the word about what we offer.

The point of this type of marketing is that it is another way to minimize the impact of traditional marketing that is not only more expensive but it uses paper, energy, ink and a whole lot more.

For more on the benefits and power of utilizing word-of-mouth marketing, you can check out WOMMA, the Word of Mouth Marketing Association. WOMMA is made up of business leaders who are making the new techniques work for them. Visit www.womma.org to learn more.

27. Start a Program of Company-Wide Volunteer Hours for Green Projects

It's far more beneficial on many levels to start a program where employees volunteer time to an organization of their choosing [or, ours] that promotes Green Projects.

To make a company-wide volunteer program work here's some good guidelines:

1. **It's Great Team Building:** People feel a great sense of togetherness picking up trash on a beach or teaching children about recycling than they typically do while toiling away at the office.
2. **It's Terrific Public Relations:** Wear those company T-shirts and show everyone who passes by that our company is doing as much good outside office walls as inside.

3. **Benefiting the Community:** Businesses that support their communities find that communities support them as well.

28. Produce a Green Newsletter

We can spread the word, not simply as a means of touting our accomplishments, but as a means of encouraging our customers, clients, suppliers, vendors and neighbors to get involved.

Perhaps a look at EPA's new consumer newsletter "GO GREEN!" will inspire us.

We can also use our newsletter for marketing and promotion. People will be receptive as long as we are promoting green products and sustainability.

Use the area around our primary content to promote our products or services. In addition, make our newsletter viral, so readers can easily forward articles, green tips, or even the entire newsletter to a friend.

We might even elect to feature stories, letters and/or photos from customer about their own green practices at home or at work. Possibly, make it a contest!

29. Treat Our Employees to Wellness

Health and wellness of body and mind go hand in hand with concerns for a healthy global picture. Healthy, unstressed employees are a benefit to our company, and by creating an atmosphere of goodwill and providing health services, we are empowering our people to be more proactive about their health, reduce sick time and absenteeism while being better prepared to take on greater responsibilities and challenges.

This can be medical screenings, and lectures on anything from proper diet, exercise to nutrition.

If these programs are setup they need to be setup and run by outside businesses to reduce liability and to deflect from the main goal of running the business.

30. Give Green

Whether it is the holiday season, or we are giving corporate or personal gifts for another reason, get into the habit of thinking green gifts. Plants, organic wines, or any number of items made from recycled materials can be thoughtful for the individual and for the Earth.

Think about the life cycle chain as it pertains to the gifts we would be giving and act accordingly.