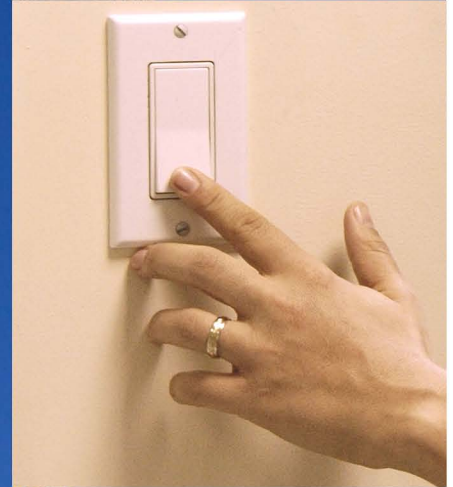


# David Suzuki at WORK



David  
Suzuki  
Foundation

SOLUTIONS ARE IN OUR NATURE



# David Suzuki at WORK

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ISBN 978-1-897375-27-3

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data for this publication is available through the National Library of Canada.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



**STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™**

We would like to thank Great-West Life for becoming the first national supporter of the David Suzuki at Work program.

The authors wish to thank the following individuals and organizations for their participation in the focus group that seeded ideas for this toolkit: Gayle Hadfield; Eric Randall, Next Level Games; Anne Stobart, Emily Carr University of Art & Design; and Henry Stoch, Deloitte. Some of their experiences are included here as case histories.

Other case histories were adapted from *Doing Business in a New Climate: A Guide to Measuring, Reducing and Offsetting Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, a David Suzuki Foundation publication by Deborah Carlson and Paul Lingl.

Special thanks to Mountain Equipment Coop for inspiration on the Dumpster Dive initiative and Working Design for the graphics on the original toolkit.

We also thank, from the David Suzuki Foundation: Ashley Arden, Nelson Agustín, Lindsay Coulter, Lana Gunnlaugson, Katie Harper, Calvin Jang, Randi Kruse, Kim Lai, Nina Legac, Katie Loftus, Gail Mainster, Akua Schatz, Aryne Sheppard and Kim Vickers.

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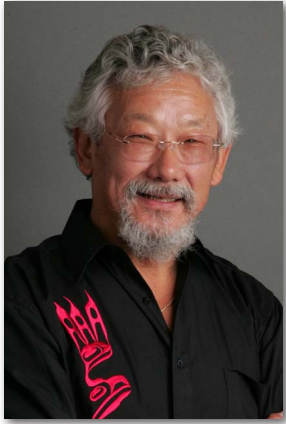
Linda Mackie (cover lower right, pp 11, 28 upper right, 33, 52, 54, 56, 57, 61)

Brooke McDonald (p 54 top)

Next Level Games (p 16 top)

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*You are invited to provide feedback on this toolkit, and share your success and challenges with greening your workplace by emailing [contact@davidsuzuki.org](mailto:contact@davidsuzuki.org).*



## WELCOME TO A GREEN AND EASY WAY OF DOING THINGS AT WORK

Some of the greatest moments in my life have been spent in my laboratory with brilliant colleagues who were passionate about their work. Since then I've been fortunate to work with people in the environmental area who are just as talented, creative and smart. Overall, I've probably spent more time with my co-workers than my family.

Chances are you can say the same thing.

We all care about the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. More and more, people are paying attention to how their actions affect nature. Canadians care about protecting the planet for the future. And they want their workplaces to do the same.

Work life isn't just about punching a clock with a bunch of strangers. Smart employers know that their people are happiest and most productive when workplace culture matches their personal values. Companies who are in it for the long run know that reducing waste and increasing efficiency makes them more profitable and competitive.

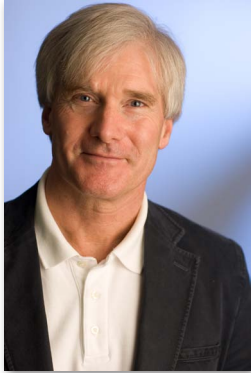
I am encouraged by the many people I've met who tell me they want to find ways to reduce their impact where they spend most of their time – at work. This toolkit is for them. It's good for employees. It's good for business. And it's good for the planet.

Real change isn't possible unless we all get involved. Let's get to work.

A handwritten signature of David Suzuki in black ink, written in a cursive style.

**David Suzuki**

CO-FOUNDER, DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION



## **GREEN BUSINESS IS GOOD BUSINESS**

All over the country, businesses are discovering that going green isn't just good for the planet, it's good for the bottom line.

Reducing waste and cutting energy consumption means saving money. Adopting in-house strategies to support abundant, clean water and safer food means happier, healthier, more productive staff. Conscientious care for the earth is good corporate citizenship, which builds brand enhancement and customer loyalty.

Many Canadian businesses are exploring the possibilities. From Canada's largest credit union, Vancity, which is now carbon neutral, to my former employer, Mountain Equipment Co-op, which has significantly reduced the energy use of its retail stores, companies are using innovative solutions to reduce their environmental footprints.

At the David Suzuki Foundation, we have been approached by many people who want to take action in their workplaces, but don't know where to start or can't seem to get support from management. We created this toolkit to help. It includes tips on building a Green Team or Sustainability Committee, and fun and easy strategies for getting people started on doing things the green way. For inspiration, it also includes real examples of businesses across Canada, including stories of their successes and the barriers they encountered.

Change doesn't always come from the top. Any person at any place in an organization can really make a difference just by planting the seeds of a great idea.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Robinson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Peter Robinson**

CEO, DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

# David Suzuki at WORK

## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION | 7

Does this sound like you? • Why do this program? • Benefits of working green

### GETTING STARTED | 10

What is employee engagement? • Becoming an employer of choice • People want green jobs • Consumers want green products and services • Sustainability road map

#### STEP ONE: BUILD YOUR TEAM | 15

Recruit support • Define your vision • Imagining the future • Assess your organization's needs

#### STEP TWO: DRAW A ROAD MAP | 19

Choose your goals • Plot your direction • Showcase your eco-heroes at work

#### STEP THREE: MOVE TO ACTION | 21

Get rolling • Track your progress • Celebrate, learn, and share • Debrief •  
Pick another goal and keep going • Effecting Change • Do some research •  
Dealing with challenges

### Goal 1 | TRIM YOUR WASTE | 25

Dumpster dive | 33

### Goal 2 | REDUCE ENERGY USE IN YOUR OFFICE BY 20 PER CENT | 35

Turn it off to win! | 41

### Goal 3 | IMPLEMENT A SMART TRANSPORTATION PLAN | 43

Smart commuter challenge | 47

### Goal 4 | CREATE A HEALTHY WORKPLACE | 51

The 100 mile lunch | 55

### Goal 5 | CONSERVE WATER | 57

Take back the tap! | 61

### CONCLUSION | 63

Frequently asked questions | 63

Sample letters | 66



## HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Canadians care deeply about the environment. They already implement those values at home by walking or biking to regular destinations, buying locally-grown food and turning down their thermostats (listen carefully --- you can hear a mother somewhere yelling “Put on a sweater!”).

People don’t check their values at the door when they leave for work each day. Canadians are hungry for opportunities to express their eco-values everywhere they live – including their workplaces.

Any person who wants to bring their environmental values to work will benefit from what’s in this guide. It includes:

- Tips on building a green team.
- Strategies for generating support from management.
- Beginner steps to getting co-workers engaged in green living.
- Ideas for things to do that go beyond entry level.
- Real-life examples.

The tabs at right show the key elements of greening your workplace from the ground up. You can navigate between sections using the coloured tabs found on all right-hand pages.

Start by reading the first section, *Getting Started*, which will help you build your office Green Team and secure support from management. The next steps are up to you. You might want to start with reducing your energy use, or check into how much waste your workplace generates. Start small and work your way up, or go big and bold. You choose.

Additional resources and links are on the final page of each section.

*“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”*

—Aristotle



# INTRODUCTION

## DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOU?

- *You care about the environment and want to see more done at work to protect it.*
- *You spend as much or more time with your co-workers than anyone else in your life.*
- *You want to bring your heart to work and show leadership in your organization.*
- *Your work would be more fulfilling if it connected to your personal values.*

Most of us spend more time with the people on the job with us each day than any of our friends, neighbours or relatives. Imagine if our workplaces reflected our deepest values and commitments!

- **What if going to work meant making the world a better, healthier, safer place?**
- **What if bringing your values to work actually helped your organization save time and money?**

This toolkit is here to help you build stronger relationships with the people you work with, and help the planet and your organization in the process.

## WHY DO THIS PROGRAM?

Canadians feel strongly about protecting their health, and they are spending more time (and money) investing in healthy options. Our country's economy is undergoing a radical shift. Now more than ever, organizational leaders understand the dual importance of engaging staff and environmental responsibility, a trend that has led to triple-bottom line accounting that considers social and ecological, as well as economic implications.

Sitting in our artificially-lit offices surrounded by walls, it's easy to forget how we're all interconnected. And yet, every day we depend on nature: we print on paper from the forest, burn fossil fuels to heat our buildings, and energize our bodies with food grown in the soil, so we have what it takes to get up and go to work each day. And we depend on each other to get our jobs done.

Alex Winch, owner of **Beach Solar Laundromat** in Toronto, reduced his eco impact by installing eight solar hot water panels (reducing natural gas consumption by 30 per cent) and switching T12 lighting to T8s. Revenues grew by 160 per cent over the next 18 months, from energy savings, and as new customers chose to use the Laundromat due to its environmentally friendly energy initiatives.

### SOURCE

[www.summerhillgroup.ca/eng/impact/programs/cool-shops.php](http://www.summerhillgroup.ca/eng/impact/programs/cool-shops.php)



Every personal action has an impact on the biosphere, the thin, fragile layer that supports all life on earth. The choices we make affect the air we breathe and the water we drink. When we add up all the outcomes of all the decisions we make in our work, we find out that Canadian workplaces have a huge impact:

- *Globally, offices are becoming a major driver of climate change as computers, data storage and communication networks suck up energy at an increasing rate.*
- *20 percent of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions come from transporting people, including daily commuting and business travel.*
- *Two-thirds of waste comes from commercial and industrial sources.*
- *In Toronto, small and medium-sized workplaces such as retail shops, small offices, small manufacturers, and restaurants consume 63 per cent of overall electricity use in the city.*

The good news is that we can all take simple actions to build a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable future...right now. And by getting others involved and building a culture of sustainability in your workplace, you can watch those small steps add up to a real difference.

And you don't need to be in management (although you could be) to start making a difference! This is an opportunity to take action on something you care about, no matter what your role in your organization.

Sustainability means working smarter. It means being more efficient, reducing waste, and creating a healthier workplace. All around the world, people are coming together with innovative ideas to reduce their environmental footprint and realize new business opportunities.

## SOURCES

Energy Saving Tips for Business, Toronto Hydro  
<http://www.torontohydro.com/sites/electricsystem/business/savingtipsforbusinesses/Pages/default.aspx>

Greening of IT  
<http://featured.matternetwork.com/2008/11/office-related-carbon-emissions-surge.cfm>

## GLOBAL WARMING 101

What is 'global warming' aka 'climate change'?

A thin veneer of atmosphere cloaks the earth, protecting the planet from the sun's radiation. Water vapour and gases such as carbon dioxide and methane retain enough heat from the sun in the atmosphere to sustain life. It's a fine balance.

Humans have disrupted that balance by pouring massive amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, mainly by burning fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal), cutting down forests and using intensive farming methods.

All the additional greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have wrapped the earth in a heat-trapping blanket that has altered climate patterns across the globe.



Human Activity and the Environment, Statistics Canada  
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16-201-x/16-201-x2007000-eng.pdf>

National Resources Canada, Office of Energy Efficiency  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/english/>

World Watch Institute  
<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5928>

## BENEFITS OF WORKING GREEN

### SAVE MONEY

- Reduce operating costs by spending less on fuel, energy, materials, and waste management.
- Improve operational efficiency and profitability.
- Reduce insurance costs by demonstrating effective risk management.

### IMPROVE STAFF MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

- Create a healthier, more comfortable workplace.
- Attract and retain employees who want to work for an environmentally responsible organization.
- Increase innovation, and loyalty.
- Motivate staff and build their leadership skills.
- Increase communication across departments.
- Expand staff skills sets.
- Reinforce your organizational value systems and foster a sense of brand integrity.

### ENHANCE COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Create opportunities to get involved in the wider community.
- Communicate commitment to innovation and organizational development.
- Demonstrate leadership and action on the environment to employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- Gain credibility from associating with the David Suzuki Foundation as you implement your environmental goals.
- Enhance your brand and increase visibility by showing leadership in the marketplace.

### GROW YOUR BUSINESS

- Access new markets and gain market share.
- Anticipate regulatory changes by going beyond compliance.
- Attract new customers.



**Interface, Inc.** is the world's largest manufacturer of modular carpet, with more than 5,000 employees. Founder Ray Anderson decided to make environmental sustainability a company-wide goal. His vision inspired his people, and many Interface innovations can be traced back to a motivated company culture that encourages staff to seek out solutions. Interface also empowers its employees to take environmental action in their personal lives.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.interfacesustainability.com](http://www.interfacesustainability.com)

## GETTING STARTED

### WHAT IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

You'll have more success with eco-friendly projects if employees at all levels are involved in the process from the start. Who better to notice efficiency gaps than people who see them every day?

When staff from all departments and all levels in your organization participate, they feel connected to the project. They are also empowered to become active players, bringing on-the-ground knowledge and problem solving skills. This, in turn, promotes innovation and helps create a healthier organizational culture.

On the surface, making these small changes such as those outlined in this guide might not seem like much, but a lot of people making a lot of small changes add up to a big difference.

Many of these activities are excellent team-building exercises, offering opportunities for co-workers to get to know one another while doing something good for the planet. If you're an employer, you may also find that some of these suggestions will make your workplaces safer and healthier. Best of all, you'll save money. Some people call it a win-win scenario. We call it sustainability.

*David Suzuki at Work* is a great way for organizations and businesses to incorporate sustainability into regular workplace practices. You're probably reading this handbook because you already care about the health of the planet. Now you have the opportunity to be a leader and steward of the environment. Not only will you help conserve nature for the future, you'll also boost morale among your colleagues.

Staff at the **Whitby Mental Health Association** noticed disposable coffee cups piling up in their trash, but everyone thought nobody else cared. It took a *David Suzuki at Work* brainstorming activity to show that many people were troubled by it. That conversation led to a decision to address the problem. "It was amazing to see the resolve that came from the team making a decision and commitment together." *Andrea Chalmers-Ozimec, Corporate Responsibility Specialist, Deloitte*

**EMPOWER EMPLOYEES TO SUGGEST IMPROVEMENTS AND REWARD THEM FOR THEIR IDEAS.**

One company expected its employee-driven energy-efficiency program to slow down after a few years. But as the company became greener and more people got involved, employees continued to find new areas of improvement. The financial savings from these initiatives also continued to grow, well beyond expectations!

#### SOURCE

*The Sustainability Advantage; Seven Business Case Benefits of a Triple Bottom Line, Bob Willard*

**Business Objects** ran a Carbon Footprint Contest, asking employees for ideas. Staff voted to determine which ideas were implemented (over 80 were submitted!), then tallied the resulting reductions and reported them back. Everyone had a chance to be involved.

#### SOURCE

*Business Objects*  
www.businessobjects.com

The link between environment and health is clear. It's in all our best interests to protect the resources we depend on for survival. There are thousands of things individuals can do to conserve nature, ranging from using non-toxic laundry detergents and reusable grocery bags, to taking public transportation and gardening without toxic chemicals.

We all want the same things—clean air, clean water, healthy food from uncontaminated soil. By doing what we can to eliminate toxins, and building energy efficiency and waste reduction into our everyday lives, we can have those things, and ensure that future generations have them, too.

That's sustainability, or 'green' living.

***In the 21st Century, all workplaces will be green. In fact, the term 'green' may disappear as so-called 'green' behaviours become second nature to us all—the 'new normal'.***



At **Teknion**, employees who suggested improvements were given the resources to make changes happen. Water, waste and energy conservation have saved the company more than \$3 million.

*"It's not just about implementing an environmental management strategy. It's about changing the culture of the people."*  
*Doug Hietkamp, Director of Sustainable Programs, Teknion*

#### SOURCE

*Teknion*

<http://www.teknion.com/about-teknion/environment/default.asp>

#### BE INCLUSIVE

Make it easy for anyone to join in. Ask the doubters what they think would work. Show colleagues and bosses why sustainability is good for the company and good for them. Celebrate your successes. And above all, keep moving along the road toward sustainability.

#### DON'T FORGET...

Many conservation measures rely on changes in employee behaviour, and any kind of behaviour change takes time. People need continual reinforcement to break through old habits. But if you keep it fun, and give lots of positive reinforcement, it won't seem like nagging!

## BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

We generate true wealth when we do things better and use resources wisely. Workplaces that are more efficient produce less waste, and show that they care about the health and safety of their employees. Other benefits include:

- Saved time and money
- Happier, more productive staff
- Improved profitability
- Reduced liability
- An edge on competitors
- A reputation as responsible, caring members of the community

## PEOPLE WANT GREEN JOBS

Everybody's talking about it: we've all seen the future and it is green. Existing employees and new hires want to be part of the growing green wave of opportunity.

Adopting the strategies in this guide, or adapting them to your work culture, will make you an employer of choice. And that means you'll hold onto your most valuable asset – your intellectual capital (i.e. your people) and attract the best and brightest of those coming into the work world for the first time.

65 per cent of U.S. companies surveyed said they value job candidates' environmental and sustainability knowledge and 78 per cent said this will increase in importance as a hiring factor within five years.

## SOURCE

National Environmental Education Foundation  
[www.neefusa.org](http://www.neefusa.org)

## IT'S EASY BEING GREEN. BUT THERE MAY BE OBSTACLES.

There are easy things we can all do to be greener employees, like flicking off lights, using less paper, and tossing cans into the proper bin. When more people start taking these small steps, the impact really adds up.

But getting everyone on board can meet with resistance. Don't be discouraged if the pace of change is slow. Be patient, but persistent. Some will be uncomfortable with change. And some won't support your goals.

*“The good news is that the challenge of reducing our impact on the planet offers an opportunity for innovation and prosperity that will not only protect the environment, it will also strengthen our economy.”*

—David Suzuki

## YOU KNOW YOUR WORKPLACE CULTURE

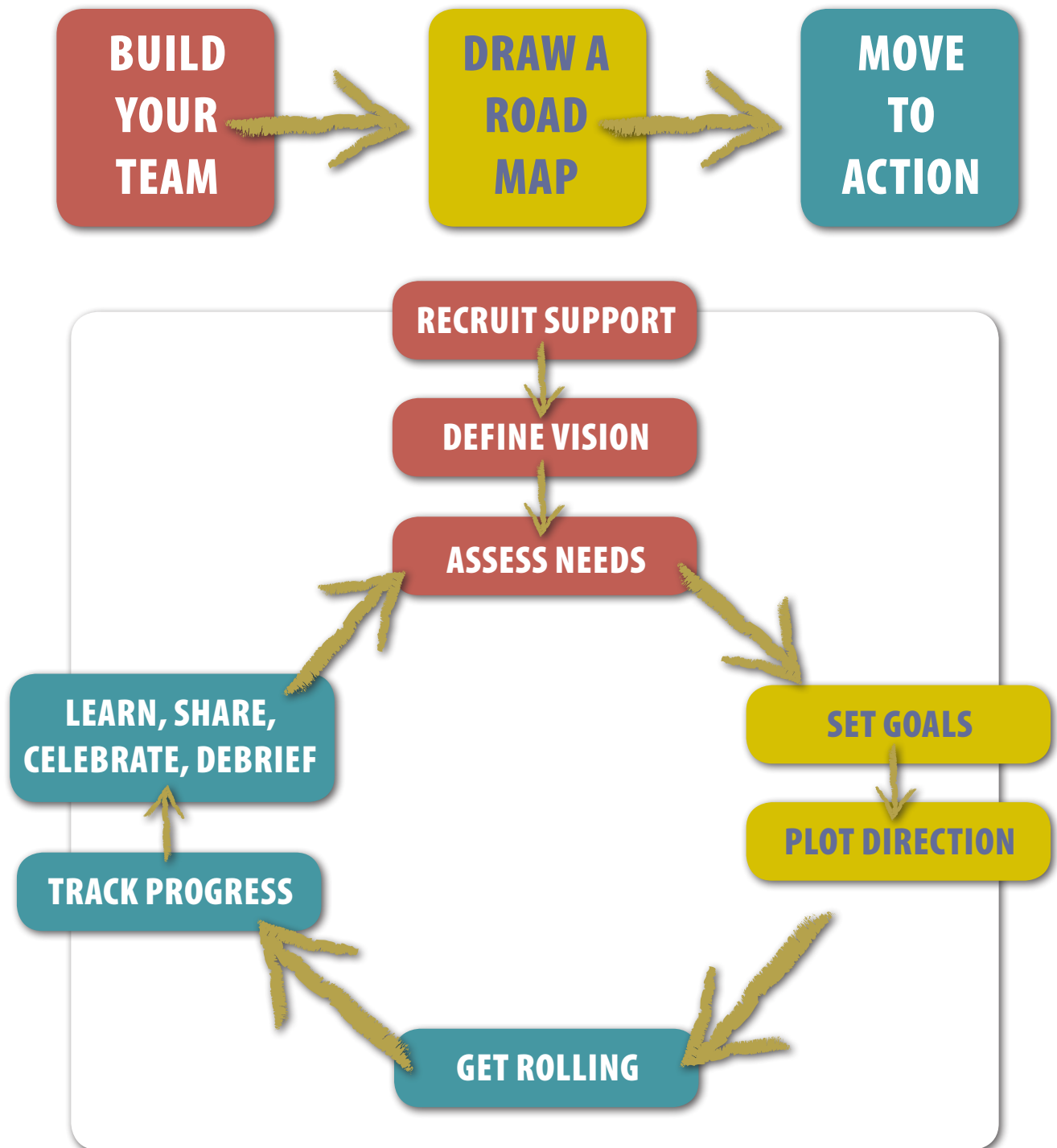
Office culture is changing, as it always has. Just 20 years ago, smoking in the workplace was considered normal and the Internet didn't exist. Today's corporate universe extols conservation. Organizations that have initiated even small-scale environmental programs enjoy tremendous competitive advantage.

Every organization is different. This toolkit is designed to be flexible and modular so that you can design a program to meet your unique needs. You can work through it from beginning to end or pull out activities to enhance a program you already have in place.



### SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

Use this graphic to help chart your course through the next ten pages.



## STEP ONE: BUILD YOUR TEAM

### RECRUIT SUPPORT

Any effective project starts with an enthusiastic team. Ask around and you'll find other people who share your interest in sustainability. (If you're stuck, try sending out a questionnaire or survey. For more on this, look at *Do some research* under *Move to Action* a few pages ahead in this section of the toolkit.) Then set up an initial brainstorming session – a chance to have a coffee break with a purposeful goal you can all feel good about!

Everyone in your workplace has a stake in making their 'home away from home' a better place, so aim for representation from all departments. That way you'll have eco-champions across the organization and your green team will benefit from the variety of their direct experiences. Custodial staff, for example, might have the best ideas for properly sorting waste. IT specialists will know about computer efficiency. And many others (and there are lots!) will have expertise to share from the eco-choices they are already making at home.

Consider a coalition that includes:

- Executive
- Management
- Operations & Facilities
- Communications & Marketing
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Support Staff

Buy-in from executive-level and senior management is crucial for the growth and long-term success of your plan. In most organizations, a senior manager is responsible for developing and implementing sustainability programs. If your team doesn't have a sponsor, put together your green plan and approach a leader in your organization for support. S/he can help add legitimacy to your team and give you the authority to get the job done.

### DEFINE YOUR VISION

Human innovation has accomplished miracles. Every piece of technology, every educational tool or solution to suffering we've benefited from started

*"There are no passengers on spaceship earth. We are all crew."*

—Marshall McLuhan

### OUTREACH

Everyone has the power to influence others, and what we do usually has more impact than what we say. Choose suppliers who share your green values, and talk up what you're doing with customers and clients.

**Green Team** candidates at **Emily Carr University of Art & Design** in Vancouver included faculty, staff, administrators, students and contractors. "The breadth of participation in this project was unprecedented. People who would not necessarily have needed to work collaboratively were suddenly sharing ideas about improving all our lives. The enthusiasm was infectious." *Anne Stobart, Human Resources Director, Emily Carr University of Art & Design*

with an individual idea. The same goes for greening your work life. If you start by imagining what sustainability might look like at your workplace, it will help connect the small steps leading to the bigger picture, and drive you toward your larger goals.



“At **Next Level Games**, about 30 per cent of staff showed up at the first meeting of our environmental committee, and we just started brainstorming a list of all the things we could do. We got bigger recycling bins (because when our old ones got full, people threw their recyclables in the garbage) and increased the number of pickups we had each month. We changed our cleaning products to environmentally friendly ones. We swapped the power supply units of our computers for more efficient ones, and held a one-month contest to encourage employees to shut their systems down at night. We donated the dollar value of our energy savings to the local Children’s Hospital - a win-win situation for the environment and the community.”  
*Pam Saunders, Next Level Games, Vancouver*

“We found a well of untapped creativity and passion to do something. Most people want to be part of something bigger.” *Eric Randall, President, Next Level Games*

*“Imagination is more important than knowledge”*

—*Albert Einstein*

Swedish retailer **IKEA Group** has a Social and Environmental Affairs team that reports directly to the president and CEO. “At a very early stage, the board and the CEO recognized how important these issues are.”  
*Tom Bergmark, Manager, Social and Environmental Affairs, IKEA Group*

**SOURCE**

*Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability Communications: Who’s Listening? Who’s Leading? What Matters Most?*  
[www.edelman.com/expertise/practices/csr/documents/edelman\\_CSR020508Final\\_000.pdf](http://www.edelman.com/expertise/practices/csr/documents/edelman_CSR020508Final_000.pdf)





# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

**Objective:** working together to create a common vision for a sustainable organization.

**Name of activity:** Imagining the Future

**Time:** one hour

**What you need:** flipchart paper and markers

## Individual Visioning (10 minutes)

Ask participants to close their eyes and imagine their ideal workplace. Advise participants not to get stuck in concerns over how to make things work. This is about expanding possibilities.

Use these questions as prompts:

- What does our organization look like in 10 years?
- How do people get to work?
- What does a typical day at the office look like?
- What kinds of products or services do we offer?
- How does work make you feel?
- Where does our building's energy come from?
- Where do we eat lunch, and where does our food come from?
- How are resources used in our office?
- What happens to office waste?
- What is the role of our workplace in the community?
- What has changed, and what is the same?

## Group Brainstorming (25 minutes)

Now ask participants to share their ideas. This is a brainstorming stage, so have the note-takers capture all of the responses on flipchart paper. Be as specific as possible (e.g., "rainwater is collected to flush toilets and water the garden"). You'll probably notice that themes emerge as similar ideas are voiced by several participants.

## Deciding on a Common Vision (25 minutes)

Using all ideas generated by your participants, work together to create a vision that will inspire and excite. Create a storyboard, image, or short paragraph that captures your common vision. Let this be your guide as you develop your sustainability action plans/road map.



### ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NEEDS

Sustainability is a journey, and it helps to know where you're starting from. Get an energy audit (or design your own). This will help you decide on your goals, and also demonstrate improvement once you're under way.

Here are some resources to get you started:

- Atco Energy Sense [www.atcoenergysense.com](http://www.atcoenergysense.com)
- BC Hydro [www.bchydro.com](http://www.bchydro.com)
- Carbon Busters [www.carbonbusters.org](http://www.carbonbusters.org)
- Earth Institute [www.canadianearthinstitute.org](http://www.canadianearthinstitute.org)
- Enwise Power Solutions Inc. [www.enwisehomeservices.com](http://www.enwisehomeservices.com)
- Green Workplace [www.greenworkplace.ca](http://www.greenworkplace.ca)
- Lighthouse Sustainability Program [www.sustainablebuildingcentre.com](http://www.sustainablebuildingcentre.com)
- The Natural Step [www.naturalstep.ca](http://www.naturalstep.ca)
- Pembina Institute [www.pembina.org](http://www.pembina.org)
- Stratos [www.stratos-sts.com](http://www.stratos-sts.com)

DIY workplace audits:

- Office of Energy Efficiency offers Fact Sheets (Lighting, HVAC, Waste Heat etc. ...) include checklist evaluation:  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/industrial/training-awareness/employees/>
- Toronto 20/20 Planner: Ways to reduce energy use at home and on the road by 20per cent <http://www.toronto.ca/health/airquality/2020/>
- Industry Canada: Three Steps to Eco-Efficiency. Part 1 includes Workplace Self-Assessment Tools (sections for Management, Purchasing, Comms & Marketing, Distribution and others)  
[http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/ee-ee.nsf/vwapj/finaltool.PDF/\\$FILE/finaltool.PDF](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/ee-ee.nsf/vwapj/finaltool.PDF/$FILE/finaltool.PDF)

### FINANCING RETROFITS

Looking to finance your building retrofits (energy-saving renovations)? Check out Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency incentives (and links to incentives from your local utility) at [www.oee.nrcan.gc.ca/commercial](http://www.oee.nrcan.gc.ca/commercial) and <http://www.oee.nrcan.gc.ca/commercial/financial-assistance/index.cfm?attr=20/>



## STEP TWO: DRAW A ROAD MAP

### CHOOSE YOUR GOALS

Your team will be able to brainstorm dozens of different activities. Where to start? It doesn't really matter! The most important thing is to develop a good idea and get rolling. Ask yourself if your goal meets these criteria:

- Does this action move us closer to our vision of a sustainable workplace?
- Will it produce measurable benefits (e.g., reduce electricity costs)?
- Is it a good return on investment?

### SOURCE

The Natural Step  
<http://www.naturalstep.ca/>

In the early stages, build motivation by choosing easy, fun activities that have a good chance of succeeding (there are tons of ideas in this toolkit!). Accumulated successes will help further the business case for sustainability in your workplace.

### PLOT YOUR DIRECTION

The most successful initiatives are well-planned, with all the elements rolled out strategically. Think systematically as you develop a road map for the next six months:

- How will you create a buzz leading up to your launch?
- How will you communicate the project's goals?
- How can your coworkers get involved?
- How will you make your message relevant to your coworkers?

**Hint:** Tailor them to what your colleagues care about, such as a healthier workplace or cost savings.

*Incorporate these key ideas in your plan:*

*"Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I'll remember. Involve me and I'll understand."*

—Confucius



YOU WANT:	TRY THIS:
More recycling Less paper wasted Less wasted electricity To make it easy To communicate	Place recycling bins at every desk Set printer default to two-sided Install occupancy sensors Make sustainable the new normal Use everything you've got—email, posters, intranet, meeting announcements and hallway chatter

**SHOWCASE YOUR ECO-HEROES AT WORK!**

Stephen Jay Gould dubbed humans the “storytelling creatures”. Stories are the way we best transmit memorable ideas. Many of your colleagues are already making sustainable choices at home and at work. We’re all influenced by what we see others do, so showcase the accountant who bikes to work or the project manager who brings lunch in reusable containers. Find forums for employees to tell their stories – in interoffice correspondence, on your intranet, or at staff meetings or lunches. Start noticing and encouraging the small green things your colleagues do, and help make sustainable choices the new normal!



**CAUTIONARY TALE**

Your organization already knows about things that work and things that don’t. Here’s where one workplace had success and another failed:

The **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta’s** program has been a resounding success. What they did:

- Created an intranet page with staff-generated tips
- Built momentum with a ‘countdown to launch day’
- Hosted a fun, informative, and participatory launch
- Surveyed attendees to get feedback
- Spotlighted staff members and their green acts
- Worked on maintaining momentum
- Got support from senior management
- Included staff from all departments

Another organization who asked to remain nameless couldn’t get their program off the ground. What they did:

- While excited to launch a green initiative, they acted quickly and didn’t plan systematically
- Didn’t consider a variety of interventions
- Sent emails, but didn’t follow them up
- Had little interest or participation from staff
- After two months, nobody remembered that it had ever happened
- Exerted little impact on the culture of their workplace

## STEP THREE: MOVE TO ACTION

### GET ROLLING

Once you're ready, launch your initiative. Create momentum for the project so your colleagues will be engaged and excited about bringing David Suzuki to work.

Hold a kickoff event. Every organization is different. This step can be as exotic as a red-carpet gala filled with paparazzi, or as simple as a verbal announcement at a staff meeting.

Here are some fun ideas to try:

- Stage a mock kidnapping of your CEO and make 100 per cent staff sign-up to the online community a condition of his or her release. (Be careful with this one; it could actually work against you!)
- Is your organization having an anniversary soon? Launching *David Suzuki at Work* is a great way to send the message that you plan on being around forever and you want to make sure the environment is, as well.
- Host a popcorn and movie party! Cook up some organic popcorn and watch David Suzuki's *Sacred Balance* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVqnmX4Lh9U>

### TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

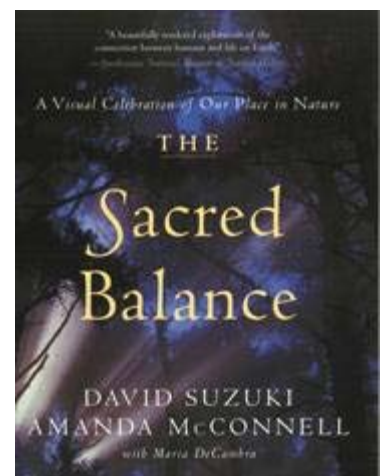
Staff will stay motivated if they feel like they're making a difference, so track the impact of their actions and let them know how they're doing. For example, repeat your energy audit at the end of your initial campaign. Demonstrating your progress will help build support among your green team and supervisors.

### CELEBRATE, LEARN, AND SHARE

When you've finished your activity, mark the occasion! Celebrate even the small things. Host an afternoon snack time and award prizes to coworkers for things such as best idea for the monthly challenge and most enthusiastic participant. Take photos and record stories for your company's website and annual report. Great prize ideas: time off work, movie tickets, commuter mugs, plants, gift certificates to local grocers, transit pass, packages of organic seeds, local wine.

*"Be the change you want to see in the world."*

—Mahatma Gandhi



**DEBRIEF**

Has your initiative made a difference? What challenges did you encounter? How did people feel about it? Do your workmates have any suggestions for further improvements to the program? Organize a suggestion box for feedback and sweeten the deal by arranging for a day off for the person with the best idea or for the staff member who shows real leadership. Post any positive feedback in your employee newsletter. (And remember to share your stories with us by writing to [contact@davidsuzuki.org](mailto:contact@davidsuzuki.org) – include ‘at work’ in the subject line).

**PICK ANOTHER GOAL AND KEEP GOING**

Reaching your sustainability goals is an ongoing process. Keep refining your strategies as you learn.

**EFFECTING CHANGE**

Getting people to change their ways is no easy task. That’s why many things that make sense take so long! Here are some useful strategies to keep in mind:

- Create a new normal. A simple thing like setting a printer default to double-siding means that someone has to stop and change it to do it the less eco-friendly way.
- Keep activities fun and hopeful. Inspiration is attractive. People will look forward to what you have planned if they know it’s going to be a good time.
- Explain the downside. People are loss averse, and will change their behaviours faster if the message is framed in terms of how much the company/person stands to lose by *not* doing that thing. For example, “*By not turning off our monitors at the end of the day, \$X/month is going down the drain*” is more effective than “*We’ll save \$X dollars/month by turning off our monitors*”. Strange, but true.
- Use peer pressure. It works. People trust people they perceive are just like themselves more than anyone else. Ask people in your organization who are making the changes you want to promote to tell their stories. And seek out stories of other workplaces like yours that have grappled with sustainability issues and won. “*If they can do it, so can we!*” is a great motivator.

**IF WE CAN DO IT,  
YOU CAN, TOO**

Green living is second nature to staff at the David Suzuki Foundation. Here are some of our workplace features that help reduce our impact on the earth:

- Motion sensors automatically turn off lights when rooms are unoccupied.
- Sensors on fixtures dim or shut off lights when natural levels increase.
- Dual flush toilets and showers with low-flow heads conserve water.
- Office furnishings made of recycled materials, wherever possible.
- 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper in photocopiers, printers and publications.
- Videoconferencing to reduce emissions from air travel (and save money on fares).
- Purchase of Gold Standard carbon offsets to compensate for emissions.
- Non-toxic soaps, cloth napkins and towels in kitchen and bathrooms.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/green-your-workplace/five-easy-ways-to-go-green-at-work/>

- Repeat yourself and use prompts. People need reminders all the way along. Put up signs and stickers. Send out notices. Stay in their faces.
- Show off. Seeing is believing, and motivating. Things like energy meters to show actual savings, charts that track progress and other measurements of accomplishment create accountability and help people understand the direct impact their choices are making.

## DO SOME RESEARCH

You can't move forward until you know where you're starting from. Get a baseline pulse of your organization. Do a survey. Send out a simple (anonymous) email questionnaire, or use a free online tool such as *Survey Monkey* ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). Here are some ideas for questions to get you started:

- What kinds of concerns do you have about our company's impact on the environment?
- What are your ideas about what we could do as a workplace to reduce our footprint?
- Would you be interested in being a part of a Green Team for our workplace?
- Are you willing to share your personal stories about your green life outside of work?



*“Change is not about restructuring, nor is it about reorganizing. Change is about reconceiving. It’s about seeing the world with new eyes.”*  
 —Dr. Göran Carstedt, *Society for Organizational Learning*

*“We gathered statistics on energy and paper use in the office and provided that information to staff. We launched an intranet web page with a host of tips and our home grown Top Ten ideas to reduce our work impact on the environment. We had a ‘countdown’ to launch day with a teaser campaign that highlighted a member of our staff doing each of the desired behaviours we were promoting. I was absolutely amazed at the creativity and volunteerism we found among staff. We also surveyed attendees to get feedback on the event and will be collating the results to inform future activities. We are developing supporting initiatives to maintain momentum.”*  
 Catherine McCann, *College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Edmonton*

## DEALING WITH CHALLENGES

You've identified the benefits of sustainability for your organization and you're eager to get started. But some of your colleagues seem to be resistant to change. Don't get frustrated! Instead, invite them into the conversation. Here's a list of concerns you may encounter, and some suggestions on how to respond:

OBSTACLE	SOLUTION
We don't have time for this	Much of what you can do consists of small steps, like turning off your computer at night. There are lots of green choices that don't require additional technology or time – they only require awareness. In fact, many of the changes suggested here promote efficiency, so they save time (and money!).
This costs too much	Many ideas that are good for the environment are good for the bottom line and many products that seem more costly in the short-run often save money in the long-run (e.g. CFL's are more energy efficient and last longer).
No one will join	Make it fun! Play games, run competitions.
No one wants to hear about global warming anymore	Stay away from crisis messaging. Doom and gloom doesn't work. Focus on the steps you CAN take. Keep the message positive. People are attracted to hope.
It won't work	Engage the doubters and ask them to be responsible for one part of the campaign. This often dissolves resistance.
No one is interested	Give recognition to people who make changes and celebrate success stories. Find ways to get people involved - ask them for their advice on what activities they feel would be most valuable.
This is overwhelming	Start with pilot projects rather than pushing for complete change immediately. Track progress and results and share these regularly. Once people see results from a small project, they will be motivated to do more.
It's too difficult to find the right products	Think of activities that involve changing how you do things around the office, such as printing on both sides of the paper or not printing out emails unless necessary. Being green does not always mean buying specialized products.



## GOAL 1 : TRIM YOUR WASTE

### BACKGROUND

Nature never wastes. But we Canadians manage to generate more than 30 million tonnes of solid waste each year, and industrial, commercial and institutional sources account for about half of that.

Thanks to visionary municipal policies, millions of people recycle and compost at home – but somehow these earth-friendly behaviours have eluded a lot of workplaces. Instead, businesses are paying for waste to go to landfills and incinerators, spending hundreds, if not thousands, of hard won dollars to have stuff shipped away and out of sight. What a waste!



When we ask Canadians if they think they live a green life, they say ‘yes’ and proudly say “*I recycle!*” But a lot of people don’t realize that recycling takes energy. There is a hierarchy in the three ‘R’s’ of environmental consciousness:

- **Reduce** first. What hasn’t been produced hasn’t cost any resources to produce and isn’t a disposal problem.
- **Reuse/repair** whenever you can. Something that has already been produced requires no new agricultural, industrial, or manufacturing processing and no packaging or transportation.
- **Recycle** keeps stuff – often toxins – out of the landfill. What can and cannot be recycled varies broadly from one part of the country to another.

Once upon a time, people dropped their candy wrappers on the ground and smoked at doctor’s offices. These behaviours are now shunned. Organizations without basic recycling programs in place have become social outcasts in the same way.

### TIME TO BAG PLASTIC BAGS

Plastic bags don’t biodegrade, but break down when exposed to sunlight – a process that can take 1,000 years. There are over 18,000 pieces of plastic in every square kilometre of ocean, killing sea mammals, birds and fish.

#### SOURCE

*The Green Guide, David Suzuki and David Boyd*

### PAPER IS EASILY RECYCLED

Canadian paper mills recycled an estimated 2.8 million tonnes of waste paper in 2002. Since 1995, about 40 per cent of waste paper has been recycled each year, compared with only 26 per cent in 1990.

#### SOURCE

*Statistics Canada*  
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/051202/dq051202b-eng.htm>

## FIRST STEPS

Show this video: [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com) at a staff meeting.

Rent or lease instead of buying.

When you do buy:

Think ahead to when it will no longer be useful and ask yourself some questions:

When your organization is through with it, where will it go?

Can it be repurposed by somebody else?

Is it biodegradable or recyclable?

Can it be easily taken apart and those parts recycled?

Look for quality. Durable products that can be continuously used and regularly maintained pay for themselves in the long run.

Seek products with a high proportion of recycled content ([http://www.lcbo.com/socialresponsibility/environmental\\_commitment.shtml](http://www.lcbo.com/socialresponsibility/environmental_commitment.shtml)).

Paper less

Print less. Use email!

Set 'double sided' as the default setting on your printer(s). (Consider multiple images per page for some projects.)

Save discarded papers that are printed on one side only and use them for scrap paper, or for working documents that only need single side printing

Reuse envelopes (again and again!). Apply address labels made of recycled paper and water-based glue. (Make some stickers as reminders to those on the receiving end.)

Use overheads and power point presentations at meetings. Offer to provide copies on a request basis only, or circulate electronic documents.

Use cloth towels or cloth-roll dispensers in washrooms.

Get online subscriptions to newspapers and magazines. If you must have hard copies, get one per office and share.

Ask your telephone company to limit directory deliveries, or cancel them altogether. Use online resources instead.

Encourage garbage-less lunches and snacks for staff – lunch kits instead of paper bags; thermoses or consumer cups instead of plastic, Styrofoam or paper cups; containers instead of plastic wraps.



Despite the rise of recycling, the average person generates twice as much trash today as in 1960, and most of that could be recycled or composted. At least 60 per cent of stuff tossed away as waste could be used as valuable resources.

### SOURCE

*The Green Guide, David Suzuki and David Boyd*

“At the **LCBO (Liquor Board of Ontario)**, we’ve eliminated plastic bags altogether. We found the best solution was to not even offer a complimentary plastic bag at all. We are depleting our plastic bag inventory and now only buy paper bags to give to our customers – or they can reuse our wine bottle cardboard boxes.”  
*Eva Zacharias, Senior Buyer, LCBC*

Use an online community where you can share documents virtually instead of sending them multiple times or using physical copies. Examples: Google doc, 4shared.com, MS Office online, Google groups.

## INTERMEDIATE

Do a garbage audit. (Instructions are in the sample activity 'Dumpster Dive' on page 33.)

Develop a sustainable purchasing guide for your organization.

Ask these questions:

Where does the product come from?

Is it made from non-toxic, recycled and/or sustainably sourced materials?

How will it be used? Can its use be shared?

What will happen to it at the end of its life?

Choose suppliers with green priorities. Ask how they practice conservation before deciding to use their services.

Talk to your suppliers about the packaging and lifecycle of their products. Purchase paper with a large percentage of post-consumer recycled content, refillable pens and highlighters, office machines that can be returned or refurbished by manufacturers.

Turn kitchen waste into black gold – start composting ([www.davidsuzuki.org/files/dos\\_donts1\\_rev1\\_\(2\).pdf](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/files/dos_donts1_rev1_(2).pdf)). If you have a garden, or green space, you can use a regular composter; if you have a balcony, try vermicomposting ([www.toronto.ca/compost/withworm.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/compost/withworm.htm)). You can use your compost for your existing garden or potted plants. If you can't compost for your own use, check with your municipality. Many are implementing programs that pick up organic and food wastes.

Avoid single use products. Keep litres of cream or milk in the fridge and bowls of sugar on the counter, instead of single serving packages.

Equip your kitchen or staff room with reusable dishes, glasses, cups and saucers, etc. Ban disposables from your premises.

Include a tag on all office email signatures NOT to print emails and attachments.

## HELP END FOOD WASTE

- Close to half of all food produced worldwide is wasted – discarded in processing, transport, supermarkets and kitchens (including offices!).
- When food waste biodegrades away from oxygen (i.e. if it's buried in a landfill), it produces methane gas, a greenhouse gas that traps more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide.
- About 38 per cent of Canada's methane emissions come from landfills.
- When people toss food, all the resources to grow, ship and produce it get chucked, too, including massive volumes of water.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/downloads/endfoodwaste1.pdf>

Get rid of toxic substances such as chemical pesticides or unused paint (but discard them appropriately so those poisons don't end up in the landfills). For information on how to do this, check out *Product Care* ([www.productcare.org](http://www.productcare.org)) and the *Georgia Strait Alliance Toxic Smart* page ([www.georgiastrait.org/?q=node/371](http://www.georgiastrait.org/?q=node/371)). Find safe alternatives.

Do you really need a new computer? Simply removing old programs and cleaning up your system can improve performance drastically. (Sometimes a complete re-install is all that's needed - try a disk imaging program such as Acronis, Symantec or Ghost to save time with this.)

## TOWARDS DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Contract an environmental consulting firm to conduct a waste assessment or audit of your workplace practices.

Ask food service vendors and caterers to meet your standards — e.g. aluminum containers instead of plastic, and re-useables instead of disposables, etc.

Seek out end users for the stuff you don't want — schools, charities, food banks. Your trash may be their treasure.

Organize an office 'bee' to find what you might need without making new purchases: turn fabric remnants into napkins or office couch cushions, collect scrap lumber to construct patio furniture, and mine thrift stores and co-workers' basements for re-useables.

Are you near a park that could use a little less litter? A shoreline that needs a clean-up? What about the sidewalk in front of your building? Get a team together and get to it! You'll be a model of good citizenship for your clients, neighbours and visitors.

Stock your office kitchen with reusable items for staff to borrow and return: travel mugs for offsite meetings or for getting coffee in the neighbourhood, and cloth bags to tote stuff home or grab groceries at the end of the day.

Set up an office collection depot for recyclables that may be a challenge to home pick-up programs, such as Styrofoam, batteries, cell phones and CFLs. Check with your municipality for drop off destinations.



## IT'S A FINE BALANCE

Emailing documents is better than mailing printed versions, but end users tend to print out emails and attachments. The more email is used, the more IT infrastructure is required and the more power is consumed. The storage of multiple documents consumes physical disk space – which costs money and uses power. Best solution: email whenever possible; print and save to disk only what you must.

## WHEN MAKING PURCHASES, LOOK FOR 'GREEN' CERTIFICATIONS:

- Cradle-to-cradle  
[www.c2ccertified.com/](http://www.c2ccertified.com/)
- Energy Star  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/energystar-energiguide-r2000.cfm?attr=4>
- Forest Stewardship Council  
[www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)
- Green Guard  
[www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org)
- Green Seal  
[www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)
- Eco-logo  
[www.ecologo.org/](http://www.ecologo.org/)

## RESOURCES

City of Edmonton

[http://www.edmonton.ca/for\\_residents/garbage-recycling.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/garbage-recycling.aspx)

Cleaners and Toxins Guide, Labour Environmental Alliance Society

<http://www.toxicfreecanada.ca/pdf/Toxins%20Guide.pdf>

Metro Vancouver Zero Waste Challenge

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/solidwaste/Residents/zerowaste/Pages/default.aspx>

Recycling Council of BC

<http://www.rcbc.bc.ca/>

The Green Guide by David Suzuki and David Boyd

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/resources/2003/the-green-guide-to-david-suzukis-nature-challenge/index.php>

Scent-Free Policy for the Workplace, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

[http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/scent\\_free.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/scent_free.html)

Waste Reduction at Mountain Equipment Co-op

[http://www.mec.ca/Main/content\\_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder\\_.....](http://www.mec.ca/Main/content_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_.....)

“Colliers International is Canada’s largest commercial real estate firm with 18 offices and 1,468 people across the country. We decided to survey our staff to see how many use the White and Yellow Pages. 90 per cent of respondents said they would forgo a copy. Of the 10 per cent that didn’t, 80 per cent said they would forgo their copy if there was a communal copy available. We now receive about one copy per floor (roughly one copy per 100 people versus almost one copy per employee) or one copy per office for those offices with less than 100 people.

Sometimes the easiest ways to reduce your environmental footprint is staring right at you.

Using the Environmental Defense Fund’s Paper Calculator we have determined over a 10 year period we would:

- save about 880 trees
- save an equivalent amount of energy to power about 20 homes for one year
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of about 30 cars for one year
- reduce particulates in the air generated by the equivalent of about 60 buses for one year
- reduce sulfur dioxide in the air generated by the equivalent of about 320 18-wheelers for one year
- save about 804,210 gallons of wastewater”

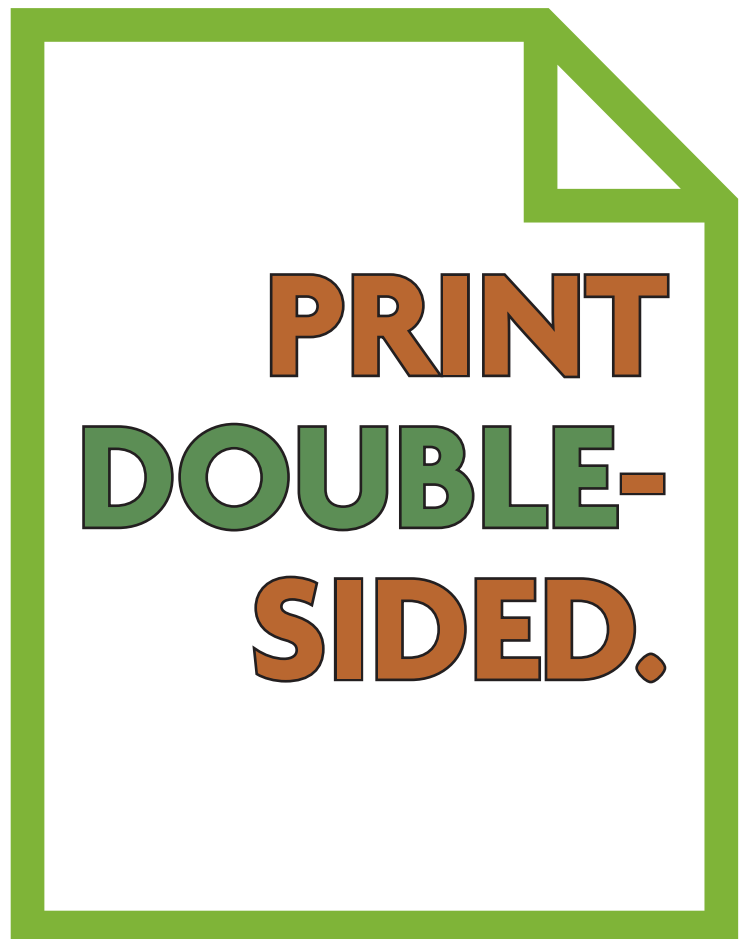
*Colin Scarlett, Vice President, Colliers*

“We carpool when we can, and never print anything before asking ourselves if it’s truly necessary. When we do print documents, we ensure that we share copies. Every team member brings a garbage-free lunch daily, and we make tea or coffee in the office kitchen to reduce the use of take-out cups and lids. We do as much online teaching to our clients as possible and actively promote eLearning as part of our business. Our company’s team building activities have included discovering new second-hand stores to supplement our ‘business casual’ attire! This year, and each year moving forward, we will be taking one business day to volunteer our time as a team to a cause related to the environment. Finding new ways to be green has been fun and kept our creative juices flowing!”

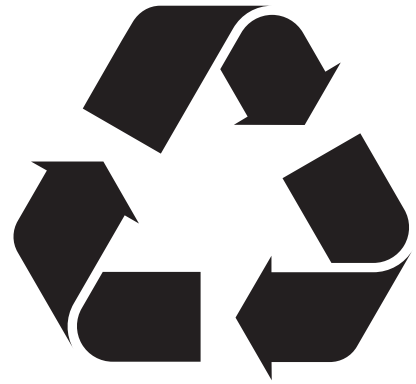
*Karla Haslam,  
Internet: Intelligence,  
Toronto*

Why are you  
printing on  
virgin paper?

**DOUBLE**  
**YOUR**  
**FUN**



**PRINT**  
**DOUBLE-**  
**SIDED.**



is that  
**recyclable?**

# TRIM YOUR WASTE





# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

Anyone on your staff who loves archeology – or garbology – will love this activity. You'll get some real evidence of what goes on at your workplace and what you can do to change it. You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

**Objective:** a clear snapshot of what is leaving your building each week and how you can become more effective at reducing the amount of waste going to the landfills.

**Name of activity:** Dumpster Dive

**Time:** three hours

**What you need:** support from management, email announcement, incentive prizes, team of Dumpster Divers, posters (sample ahead)



## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Secure support from management.
2. Announce the project at a staff meeting or via email.
3. Purchase incentive prizes (or secure donations from neighbouring businesses – a great conversation starter!). Great prize ideas: movie tickets, commuter mugs, plants, gift certificates to local grocers, transit pass, packages of organic seeds, local wine.
4. Appoint a team of Dumpster Divers to do the deed. Outfit them with a Dumpster Dive Kit (see next page).
5. Cancel garbage and recycling pick up for the week of your event, to ensure a representative sample. Conduct your dive the day before the next pick up.
6. On the appointed day, dive in:
  - Count all the bags of garbage in your dumpster.
  - Randomly select a sample bag to examine closely.
  - Unpack the selected bag and separate it into categories: paper, glass, metals, plastics, compostables, hazardous waste, wood and textiles.
  - Weigh each pile.
  - Calculate the percentage weight of each pile against the total.
  - If neighbours get curious, use the opportunity to start a conversation about what we can all do to lower our impact. Report back to staff using the Dumpster Dive Data Collection form (next page)
  - Share photos and stories (an excuse to talk trash!) from Divers about what they observed. (Take special note of what might have been reused or repaired, recycled or composted – that's the stuff you can do something about.)
7. Ask staff for feedback, ideas and improvements.
8. Implement those ideas.

# DUMPSTER DIVE KIT

Getting into garbage – literally – can be messy and stinky. Outfit your divers with

- Cotton jump suits (or something similar)
- Heavy duty rubber gloves
- Protective glasses
- Dust masks

They'll also need:

- Plastic sheets – for laying out specimens
- Box cutters
- A scale
- Pens, markers, masking tape
- Data collection forms

## DUMPSTER DIVE DATA COLLECTION

**Date:**

**Company name:**

**Dumpster dive team members:**

**Total weight of sample:**

SAMPLE MATERIAL	WEIGHT OF SAMPLE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WEIGHT
Paper		
Glass		
Metal		
Compostables		
Hazardous waste		
Wood		
Textiles		

**Comments:**

## GOAL 2 : REDUCE ENERGY USE IN YOUR OFFICE BY 20 PER CENT

### BACKGROUND

It's easy to forget that buildings are plugged into nature. Wherever you work, it takes lots of energy to light your workspace, power your electronic devices and heat or cool your building. And that energy comes from somewhere.

Burning fossil fuels (coal, natural gas and oil) is responsible for air pollution as well as emissions of global warming-causing greenhouse gasses.

Other forms of electricity generation such as nuclear and large-scale hydro carry their own environmental, health, social and financial costs.

Wherever your power comes from, it doesn't make sense to waste it.

Energy represents about 19 per cent of total expenditures for the typical office building. Lighting, heating and cooling represent between 54 and 71 per cent of total use depending on climate, making those systems the best targets for energy savings.

Not only do we benefit from protecting our climate, but many of these energy saving changes pay for themselves. Once a capital investment is paid off, the savings accrued to you are a bonus. (What will you do with that money?)

### SOURCE

BC Hydro

[http://www.bchydro.com/powersmart/technology\\_tips/managing\\_energy\\_costs/office\\_buildings.html](http://www.bchydro.com/powersmart/technology_tips/managing_energy_costs/office_buildings.html)

### LOOK FOR THE ENERGY STAR

According to Natural Resources Canada, energy savings from using ENERGY STAR equipment can amount to \$3,491/year for an office of 200 employees. A current list of products in Canada can be found at [www.energystar.gc.ca](http://www.energystar.gc.ca).



An easy energy waste check up tip from IKEA's UK Environmental Manager: come in whatever your "off" hours are and see what's been left on!

### SOURCE

[www.ethicalcorp.com/content.asp?ContentID=5339](http://www.ethicalcorp.com/content.asp?ContentID=5339)

### WHERE IS THE MOST ENERGY LOSS?

- Buildings – heating, cooling
- Lighting
- Electronic equipment

### WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

- Install or upgrade technology
- Change employee behaviour
- Promote energy conservation

"Green is not just a nicety – careful power management will actually help businesses save money."  
*Ken Harvey, Group CIO, HSBC*

### SOURCE

<http://www.computerweekly.com/Articles/2007/01/04/220980/how-to-make-money-by-going-green.htm>

## FIRST STEPS

Run a contest to help staff learn energy-saving habits. (Instructions are in the sample activity 'Turn it Off to Win!' on page 41.)

Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Healthy for you and the planet.

Enable energy-saving settings on all equipment.

Unplug cell phone chargers, calculators, TVs and anything else with an LED display – the so-called 'energy vampires' – until you need them. As long as they're lit, they're using electricity. (*"Phantom energy is like a leaky faucet, only you can't see what you're wasting."* David Suzuki) Plug equipment into power bars and turn those off until necessary.

Most computers remain idle for the greater part of the day, so get staff in the habit of turning theirs off when away from their desks for extended periods of time. Laptop users can change their power savings settings to turn screens and disks off.

Hit the lights!

Replacing incandescent bulbs with CFLs or installing energy efficient T8 or T5 fluorescent tubes instead of T12s can reduce your energy use by 40 per cent. Because these lights emit less heat, you'll also save on cooling needs in the summer. (And the fluorescent tubes don't give off that awful hum!)

Install occupancy sensors in washrooms and conference rooms and never worry about lighting up empty spaces.

Turn off lights that are not in use and at the end of the day.

Control your temperature!

Install a programmable thermostat to automatically control temperature settings and save 10 to 70 per cent on heating and cooling costs.

- In the summer, raise it to 25°C (28°C at night) to save on air conditioning.
- In the winter, lower it to 20°C (17°C at night) to reduce heating costs.

Keep exterior doors closed. In the summer, close blinds or curtains to reduce heat build-up.

Make sure all vents are clear. Change furnace filters.

Seal leaks and windows and doors. Insulate.

- BC office workers waste 500 gigawatt hours of electricity every year by leaving computers on unnecessarily —about \$30 million worth!
- Colleges in Quebec City and Ottawa have each saved about \$17,000 a year by shutting down their computers for five to seven hours a night.

### SOURCE

Natural Resources Canada  
Office of Energy Efficiency  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/english/>

### WHAT A WASTE!

- It costs between \$75 to \$165 a year to run an inefficient computer and monitor 24 hours a day.
- Computers left on at night needlessly waste \$100 per workstation. (For an organization with 100 workstations, that's \$10,000 a year!)
- Enabling energy-saving features makes it easy to power down equipment when it's not in use.
- Save even more by switching to energy efficient Energy Star products.

### SOURCE

Natural Resources Canada  
Office of Energy Efficiency  
<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/english/>

## INTERMEDIATE

An energy audit is an invaluable exercise to evaluate your energy use and plan reductions. Many utilities provide them for free or you can conduct one yourself. Buy or borrow a power-measuring device to determine how much energy different electronic equipment uses. Your local utility can also provide a summary of your organization's monthly energy use. (Resources are listed in the *Getting Started* section of this toolkit, under *Assess your organization's needs*.)

Appliances and electronics are big power suckers. Look for the Energy Star logo when replacing electronic equipment. These are more energy efficient, so you'll pay back the extra cost quickly.

Use reflective window film, awnings or shade trees to keep the heat from coming in through south and west facing windows.

Install timers on printers and photocopies. Set defaults to the most energy savings possible.

Service HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) systems regularly. Maintenance activities can save up to 30 per cent of fan energy and up to 10 per cent of space conditioning energy use.

Consider using hosted computer applications, which are located in energy-efficient data centres.

Organizations using multiple separate computer servers, which are probably not active all of the time, will benefit from virtualization - streamlining and consolidation.

Buy laptops instead of desktops. They consume less power and are great for telecommuting workers.

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### COMPUTER HOUSEKEEPING

How many people save email attachments in their mailboxes AND file a copy elsewhere on their computer? All virtual files actually take up physical space on a device such as a disk drive, which costs money, consumes energy and needs maintenance. Instead of running out to buy more disk drives, free up space by cleaning up what you already have.

### POURING ENERGY DOWN THE DRAIN

- Lighting a typical office overnight wastes enough energy to heat water for 1,000 cups of coffee.
- 44 per cent of the electricity used in office buildings is spent on lighting alone.

#### SOURCE

[http://content.monster.ca/14503\\_en-CA\\_p1.asp](http://content.monster.ca/14503_en-CA_p1.asp)

*M&M Meat Shops* franchise owner Peter Charters made these changes in his two Cambridge, Ontario locations:

- A resistor for freezer heater circuits that reduced the average energy load by 70 – 75 per cent (saving \$250 – \$300 per month).
- 28 watt CFL freezer lights instead of 100 watt incandescents.
- Programmable thermostats.
- Motion sensor light switches in bathroom and storage areas.
- T8 fluorescent tube lights instead of T12s, decreasing energy bills a further 25 per cent).

#### SOURCE

<http://www.summerhillgroup.ca/eng/impact/programs/cool-shops.php>

## TOWARDS DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Landlords and tenants can work together and perhaps share costs to improve energy efficiency. (Landlords boost the value of their property; renters reduce their electricity bills.)

Relocating or renovating? Consult with a LEED-certified architect or designer. They'll help you design your space to maximize energy efficiency and other environmental indicators. Moving is a good time to think about reducing the amount of space your office requires, which translates into less energy for heating, lighting and cooling.

Buy wisely: products made from recycled materials usually contain less embodied energy (i.e. the energy associated with making the product) than those made from virgin materials. For example, paper from post-consumer recycled fibres saves trees and energy used in the manufacturing process.

Go carbon neutral. Find ways to measure, reduce and offset your carbon emissions in our comprehensive guide, *Doing Business in a New Climate* <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/reports/2010/doing-business-in-a-new-climate/index.php>.

Power with renewable energy. There are grants to help finance renewable energy installations, such as solar hot water heaters or solar panels. In some places, you can sell unused electricity back to the grid, making renewable energy a wise investment. Lots of organizations are purchasing renewable energy from their utility (such as Bullfrog Power in Ontario and B.C.) to support the transition to clean energy.

Bring in an expert to 'tune-up' your building's mechanical equipment, including HVAC, controls and electrical systems. This can help you avoid having to purchase or install new or additional equipment.



Here are some of the ways **Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC)**, lightens its impact on the planet:

- All new facilities are built to high energy efficiency standards. (New stores in Ottawa and Winnipeg, for example, met Canada's C2000 Green Building Standard by achieving a 50 per cent reduction in energy consumption over conventional structures.)
- In 2008, MEC increased their waste diversion rate from 83 per cent to 92 per cent, so less waste goes to landfills.
- They've reduced inventory packaging, member use of shopping bags and print their catalogues with FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified paper with at least 30 per cent post consumer recycled content.

### SOURCE

[http://www.mec.ca/Main/content\\_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder\\_id=2534374302885133&bmUID=1241477067457](http://www.mec.ca/Main/content_text.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302885133&bmUID=1241477067457)

## RESOURCES

Natural Resources Canada, Energy Efficiency Planning and Management Guide

[http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/infosource/pub/cipec/Managementguide\\_E.pdf](http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/publications/infosource/pub/cipec/Managementguide_E.pdf)

Toronto Hydro, Energy Savings for Offices and Small Businesses

<http://www.torontohydro.com/sites/electricsystem/business/savingtipsforbusinesses/Pages/EnergySavingSmallBusiness.aspx>

Hudson's Bay Company (Hbc) worked with an energy consulting firm to reduce energy use in its nearly 600 stores across Canada and made these changes:

- Retrofitted existing stores with T8 or more efficient lighting.
- Installed building automation systems in all stores to control lighting, temperature and humidity.
- Build all new stores to standards exceeding the Model National Energy Code. The greenest Zellers ever, for example, features a reflective white roof, energy recovery ventilators, high-efficiency HVAC, LED signage, wind turbines, and solar panels.
- Committed to purchasing green power.

Energy reduction is a management priority at Hbc. They work with local managers and communicate regularly with staff through discussion groups, in-store posters, newsletter articles and an annual social responsibility report.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

[www.hbc.com](http://www.hbc.com)



**turn  
off  
the  
lights!**



# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

**Objective:** encourage staff to turn off their computers and monitors when they finish work each day.

**Name of activity:** Turn it Off to Win!

**Time:** two weeks (about five minutes each day)

**What you need:** support from management, email announcement, incentive prizes, team of Climate Captains, posters (sample ahead)

---

## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Announce the contest at a staff meeting or via email.
2. Purchase incentive prizes (or secure donations from neighbouring businesses). Great prize ideas: movie tickets, commuter mugs, plants, gift certificates to local grocers, transit pass, packages of organic seeds, local wine.
3. Post a contest master list of all staff online, or in your kitchen or staff room.
4. Set up posters around the office to remind people to 'Turn it off to win!'
5. Recruit volunteer ClimateCaptains to randomly check staff computers and monitors at the end of each day over a two-week period. Those who don't remember to 'Turn it off!' get their names removed from the master list. (If you think they'll need it, give each employee three strikes before they're out.)
6. At the end of the two-week period, all staff whose names are still on the list are eligible to win a prize. Hold a draw to choose one winner (or several – your choice!) from the names remaining.
7. Get together with all workplace staff to share stories and photos, learn and celebrate.





## GOAL 3 : IMPLEMENT A SMART TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### BACKGROUND

Transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions and air toxins in Canada, and accounts for 20 per cent of Canada's emissions. It also causes asthma-inducing smog and water pollution. And because we build cities for cars instead of people, we waste valuable urban space and suffer the effects of traffic congestion.

There are lots of ways to create a transportation plan for staff that's appealing, cost effective, healthy and environmentally friendly. The biggest success comes from reducing travel by car and plane. People need to ask themselves: **Is this travel necessary?** This means rethinking the daily commute and business travel, and even the location of your offices.

Where travel is necessary, ask: **Can we do it better?** Smart travelling focuses on active transport and public transit, carpooling, fleet maintenance and better driving. It also means purchasing the most fuel-efficient vehicles possible and rethinking procurement, shipping and courier use.

Fewer trips to meetings and conferences means less employee fatigue, increased productivity, savings on travel expenses AND lower emissions. Win, win win.

### REDUCE YOUR COMMUTE

The average Canadian spends the equivalent of 36 eight-hour days commuting to and from work every year! Telecommuting (working from home) can improve employee productivity and increase quality of life.

### SOURCE

*Statistics Canada*  
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/060712/dq060712b-eng.htm>

### *Teletrips*

<http://www.i4cp.com/trendwatchers/2009/03/06/can-telework-cut-costs-and-raise-productivity-in-todays-economy>

Cycling can be the most efficient way of travelling if you live less than 10km from work. Lots of cyclists find their commute the most pleasant part of their day. More fun than sitting in gridlock!

### SOURCE

*CommuterChallenge*  
[http://www.commuterchallenge.ca/?page\\_id=397&lang=en](http://www.commuterchallenge.ca/?page_id=397&lang=en)

*Statistics Canada*  
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/061107/dq061107b-eng.htm>



## FIRST STEPS

Reward staff who bike, walk or take public transit to work.

Organize carpools. Use maps to make it easy for commuters to find coworkers in their neighbourhood. (Find your community by searching <http://maps.google.com>. Print the map and include it alongside a sign-up sheet to help people locate where they live. You could even include stickers or tacks to illustrate

locations.) Carpools help build relationships within the organization. Great for decompressing at the end of a busy day!

Implement an anti-idling policy.

If feasible, allow employees to work from home (telecommute) one day a week to automatically reduce transportation by 20 per cent.

Try videoconferencing instead of traveling for face-to-face meetings. Built-in cameras make green communications easy and sophisticated virtualization technologies make you feel like you're really there.

If you must travel, make sure trips are multi-purpose. And use the most sustainable option – take a bus or train, instead of a plane, if possible.

Sign your organization up for Commuter Challenge in the spring ([www.commuterchallenge.ca](http://www.commuterchallenge.ca)), or design your own any time of year. (See sample activity 'Smart Commuter Challenge' on page 47.)



## INTERMEDIATE

Organize bulk purchases of discounted bus passes or ask management to subsidize sustainable transit (instead of parking spaces).

Take the train or bus for frequent travel between nearby cities instead of driving or flying.

For special events or conferences, book venues that are nearby and accessible by transit.

Use bike couriers or companies running fleets of hybrid and fuel-efficient cars.

Offer Green Driving Training ([www.caasco.com/community/autogreen/eco-driving-tips.jsp](http://www.caasco.com/community/autogreen/eco-driving-tips.jsp)) to your fleet's company drivers and other interested

"Teleconferencing has a huge ROI (return on investment) for us because it's a cheaper use of people's time."

*Dave Cline, CIO, Discovery Communications*

### SOURCE

[http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/310516/Discovery\\_Communications\\_LLC](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/310516/Discovery_Communications_LLC)

To encourage smart commuting, the City of Summerside, PEI rewarded staff who walked, cycled or took public transit to work with bonus "green" vacation days.

### SOURCE

*cbc.ca*  
<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/prince-edward-island/story/2008/07/22/green-commuters.html>

Operators for Montreal's transit authority were trained in eco-friendly driving. Simple changes such as going easy on the gas pedal and avoiding idling helped save 2000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions! Many drivers adopted these same habits at home.

### SOURCE

*STM*  
[http://stm.info/English/en-bref/a-environnement\\_intro.htm](http://stm.info/English/en-bref/a-environnement_intro.htm)

employees. They'll save fuel by adopting simple driving habits, maintaining their vehicles and using better trip planning.

Review shipping policies to reduce volume.

Install bike racks and showers so that people can turn their commute into their daily exercise routine.

Telecommute. Ask your employer about working from home.

Consider online training for employee education instead of bringing people in or shipping staff to far away places.

## TOWARDS DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Locate facilities in areas with access to public transit and close to where staff live.

Think upstream: develop a sustainable procurement policy and choose local suppliers or those that manage their emissions.

Establish a four-day work week.

Replace your company's fleet with hybrid or low-emission vehicles.

### BREAK THE CAR HABIT

**Commuter Challenge** ([www.commuterchallenge.ca](http://www.commuterchallenge.ca)) encourages Canadians to walk, cycle, take transit, carpool or telecommute instead of driving solo to work. It fosters fun and friendly competition between workplaces and communities and is a great way to reach out and show off your stuff. Staff can register online and see the actual greenhouse gas reductions they've achieved.

### OFFSETTING AIR TRAVEL

A carbon offset is a reduction in emissions created by one party that can be purchased and used to balance the emissions of another. Many airlines offer customers carbon offsets for their flights. Remind employees to look for this option whenever they fly, and ask your travel agency to implement this as a default strategy for all your workplace travel.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

*Purchasing Carbon Offsets: A Guide for Canadian Consumers, Businesses and Organizations and Consumers*

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/resources/2009/purchasing-carbon-offsets/>



Go carbon neutral: measure and reduce your organization's greenhouse gas emissions; offset the remainder by investing in Gold Standard carbon offsets. Consult *Doing Business in a New Climate* (<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/resources/2010/doing-business-in-a-new-climate/>) for more information.

## LINKS

Campaign Case Study

<http://www.toolsofchange.com/English/CaseStudies/default.asp?ID=113>

Car Sharing

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/programs/environment-utsp-carsharing-1068.htm>

Commuter Challenge

[www.commuterchallenge.ca](http://www.commuterchallenge.ca)

Fleet Smart

<http://fleetsmart.nrcan.gc.ca/index.cfm?>

Green Action Centre: At Work

<http://greenactioncentre.ca/live/at-work/>

Green Driving Training

<http://www.caasco.com/community/autogreen/eco-driving-tips.jsp>

Office of Energy Efficiency

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/transportation/personal/index.cfm?attr=8>

Purchasing Carbon Offsets: A Guide for Canadian Consumers, Businesses and Organizations and Consumers

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/resources/2009/purchasing-carbon-offsets/>

- The average car makes 2,000 trips each year of distances three kilometers or less.
- A single bus takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and reduces air pollutants by nine tonnes a year.
- Idling an average vehicle ten minutes a day uses about 100 liters of gas per year. At \$1.00 per litre, that's \$100 going up in smoke per year.
- If Canadians reduced auto idling by just three minutes per day, we'd collectively save 630 million litres of fuel annually.

## SOURCES

[www.crd.bc.ca/rte/idling.htm](http://www.crd.bc.ca/rte/idling.htm)

[www.idlefreebc.ca](http://www.idlefreebc.ca)



Purolator launched its Green the Fleet initiative in 2002, that included:

- Optimized routes for shorter trips, lowering fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and improving operational efficiency and customer service.
- Adding hybrid and electric vehicles.
- More vehicle servicing to improve performance.
- Recycled waste oil.
- A no-idling policy for drivers.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[www.purolator.com](http://www.purolator.com)



# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

Many organizations participate in Commuter Challenge ([www.commuterchallenge.ca](http://www.commuterchallenge.ca)) in the spring, but you can create your own any time of year. Changing your commute requires a major shift in personal behaviour, so you may meet with resistance from staff. There will be inevitable barriers to individual efforts (*"The bus never came!" "I got soaked on my bike ride!"*). Talk about them and see if there is anything you can do as an organization to overcome barriers. You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

**Objective:** promote sustainable transportation choices and reduce single-occupancy vehicles trips

**Name of activity:** Smart Commuter Challenge

**Time:** one week

**What you need:** support from management, email announcement, a Coordinator and Commuter Captains, incentive prizes, bus tickets, sign-up sheets (see *Challenge Your Commute!* on the next page), posters (samples ahead)

---

## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Secure support from management.
2. Invite key staff to volunteer as Commuter Captains in each department.
3. Collect data on staff commuting choices.
4. Create buzz with email and staff meeting announcements, posters and bulletin board displays. Include information about sustainable transportation and how to participate.
5. Ask for commitments: invite employees to register their participation online or in person and have Commuter Captains visit each employee personally to ask for a pledge.
6. Encourage friendly competition among departments, always maintaining a positive attitude (no one is made to feel bad if they can't participate).
7. Provide local transit information and free transit tickets. Post carpooling sign-up sheets and help match carpoolers in the same neighbourhood.
8. Host a special breakfast in celebration of healthy commuting.
9. Provide bike tune-up basics or a running clinic (see if your coworkers can share their skills).
10. Wrap up your event. Report participation rate and, if possible, calculate the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Award prizes to the most committed departments and individuals.
11. Share photos, stories and successes from the campaign.

# CHALLENGE YOUR COMMUTE!

Odds are good you live just around the corner from a colleague. Why not carpool? You'll save time, money and catch up on juicy gossip. Fill in this form and look forward to a stress-free commute.

NAME	HOME ADDRESS	WORK HOURS	OWN A CAR?	EMAIL

Want to see how close you live to each other? Search <http://maps.google.com/> to find your community. Print the map and include it along side this sign-up sheet to help people locate where they live. You could even include stickers or tacks to illustrate locations.



# BIKING & WALKING



**ARE GOOD FOR YOU  
AND THE PLANET**

# CHALLENGE YOUR COMMUTE!



**LEAVE YOUR CAR AT HOME!**

## GOAL 4 : CREATE A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

### BACKGROUND

Human ingenuity has created hundreds of thousands of chemicals that the earth – and the human body - has never had to deal with before. Some are known to be dangerous. The impact of others is not yet understood.

Many of these substances can turn up in the working environment and affect the health of people exposed to them. These include products that can trigger severe allergic reactions, cause liver or kidney damage, interfere with the body's endocrine systems, affect reproductive processes – even cause cancer.

Since most of us spend at least a third of our day at work, it makes sense to create organizational policy to help employees lower their personal toxic loads, and protect the health of the planet in the process.

Some things to consider:

The air inside our work buildings can be two to five times worse than the air outside, especially in high-rise buildings where tenants aren't allowed to open windows.

Building tenants can be exposed to harmful chemicals released from paint, office furniture and industrial cleaners. In fact, some studies suggest that up to one-third of new and renovated buildings suffer from sick building syndrome (SBS).

We are constantly exposed to toxins through fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides used in food production, shipping and storage.

Employees are a company's greatest asset, and leading organizations take a 'big picture' approach to workplace wellness. A healthy workplace includes:

A safe working environment.

Work/life balance.

An organizational culture that engages employee's values.

True workplace wellness translates into greater loyalty and employee retention, higher productivity, and fewer sick days.

*"What we do to nature, we do to ourselves." David Suzuki*

### LUNCHING TOGETHER IS TEAM BUILDING (AND DELICIOUS!)

Staff at the David Suzuki Foundation formed a weekly Soup Club where individuals take rotating turns bringing soup and bread/crackers. (To include as many people as possible, our soups must be vegetarian. You know your culture; you make the rules.) One day each week most of us don't have to worry about lunch and we still get a tasty meal! We compile and share recipes, too. In spring, we switch to Salad Club, where each person brings something for the 'bar' – greens, seeds, fruits, etc – it's fun and nutritious!

### ACTIVE LIFESTYLE: HEALTHY FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

Installing bike racks and showers can reduce your organization's transportation footprint and generate employee goodwill. Taking the stairs promotes fitness while saving energy. Once again, green proves to be good for business.

## FIRST STEPS

Protect the health of custodial staff (and all employees) by switching to non-toxic cleaners  
OR

Purchase supplies for someone to make them from scratch. Check out these recipes: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/resources/2010/green-cleaning-recipes/index.php>

Add air-filtering plants to your workspace. (Watch this video: [http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/kamal\\_meattle\\_on\\_how\\_to\\_grow\\_your\\_own\\_fresh\\_air.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/kamal_meattle_on_how_to_grow_your_own_fresh_air.html)).

Implement a scent-free policy.

Eat green food. (*"Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."* Michael Pollan)

Challenge staff to a week of 100 Mile Lunches (see sample activity on page 57).

Use caterers that support your values:

- Best choice: meat-free, sustainable seafood only ([www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org)), local and organic
- Second best: local
- When ordering meats, buy local and organic

Eliminate pesticides and use organic fertilizers for your landscaping. Choose native plants, which are adapted to local conditions.

Encourage staff to take the stairs (<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sth-evs/english/index-eng.php>) instead of the elevator. (Consider decorating stairwells to make them community meeting spaces instead of concrete corridors.)

## INTERMEDIATE

Upgrade the HVAC system to higher standard model, and make sure filters are changed regularly.

When renovating or redecorating, use VOC (volatile organic compound)-free paints, carpeting, and office furniture. Look for Green Guard (<http://www.greenguard.org/>) certification.

Look for electronics that are free of PBDEs (toxic fire retardants, banned in



Poor ventilation, coupled with chemicals from adhesives, carpeting, cleaning products, upholstery, copy machines and pesticides can cause Sick Building Syndrome (SBS), which may make workers feel ill, although there's no specific cause. Symptoms include headaches, fatigue, confusion, dizziness, or itchiness which disappears once workers leave the building.

Food is responsible for a whopping 25 per cent of our ecological footprint! The average meal travels 1200 km (1500 miles) from the field to plate, generating emissions, using up valuable resources, and creating waste along the way, and probably includes pesticides and herbicides to prevent moulds and fungus during shipping. Locally-grown and raised foods have less ground to cover, and organic farms don't use toxic chemicals on plants, or antibiotics and hormones in meats. The bottom line: meals made from local, seasonal, organic foods are better for your health, and the planet's.

### SOURCE

*David Suzuki Foundation*  
<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/eat-for-a-healthy-planet/food-and-climate-change/>

some jurisdictions).

Choose suppliers that practice conservation before deciding to use their services.

Purchase products made with  
 high-content recycled materials  
 organic, biodegradable  
 or compostable material  
 reduced chemical content  
 minimal and recyclable packaging



In your staff room, switch to teas and coffees that are organic, fair-trade and bird-friendly (<http://www.dauidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/eat-for-a-healthy-planet/choose-bird-friendly-coffee-and-cocoa/index.php>).

Use your green space or balcony to grow pesticide-free foods.

## TOWARDS DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Pursue higher LEED building standards.

Develop a corporate social responsibility policy that addresses your organization's environmental footprint and health and wellness in the workplace. Maintain a high level of employee engagement as you implement this policy.

Organize organic gardening workshops at lunch time.

Turn kitchen waste into black gold – start composting (<http://www.dauidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/downloads/composting-dos-donts1.pdf>). If your physical plant has a garden, or green space, you can use a regular composter; if you have a balcony, try vermicomposting (<http://www.toronto.ca/compost/withworm.htm>). You can use your compost for your existing garden or potted plants AND your compost program can help you meet your organization's waste reduction targets.

Support sustainable farming by setting up bulk purchases from a local organic farmer. Try organizing a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) group in your office: participating employees buy shares in a local farm and receive a hearty box of produce all summer long.

If your workplace has a cafeteria, work with the food service provider to serve local, organic food. Incorporate seasonal and locally-grown produce, introduce meat-free meals and serve seafood recommended by *Canada's Sustainable Seafood Guide* ([www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org)).

## A DIRTY SECRET

One third of commercial cleaning products are potentially harmful to human health and the environment. Switching to green cleaners can significantly improve indoor air quality, reduce cleaning-related health problems and absenteeism, and increase productivity and morale.

### SOURCE

[http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing\\_guides/cleaners/purchasing\\_guide.pdf](http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing_guides/cleaners/purchasing_guide.pdf)

## EATING BETTER BUILDS COMMUNITY

Baystate Medical Centre in Massachusetts partners with a local organic farm to deliver fresh seasonal produce to their offices. Using the Community Supported Agriculture model, participating employees deduct the cost of a weekly share directly from their payroll, making healthy eating affordable and convenient. The initiative is highly valued, in part because of the strong relationship employees have built with their local farmers.



### EAT LOWER ON THE FOOD CHAIN

Canadians eat more than twice as much meat as the global average and three times the amount recommended by the World Cancer Research Fund. Along with the Australia and the U.S., we consume more meat per person than any other country in the world!

- Meat production uses so much energy and water that choosing meatless meals can have a bigger impact on the planet than changing the type of car you drive.
- Globally, about 18 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions are associated with meat consumption
- Compared to meat eaters, vegetarians have 24 per cent fewer deaths from heart disease, even when smoking, exercise and socioeconomic status are taken into account.
- Eating meatless also reduces exposure to chemicals and antibiotics fed to livestock.

### SOURCE

*David Suzuki Foundation*

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/eat-for-a-healthy-planet/food-and-climate-change/>

*My Footprint*

<http://www.myfootprint.org/en/>

### USE NON-TOXIC CLEANING PRODUCTS

To a great extent, the marketplace for disinfectants and antibacterial soaps is based on a somewhat hysterical fear of germs and an overwrought concern for perfection.

- Some cleaners use highly caustic chemicals that burn eyes and skin, and damage lungs when inhaled.
- Others contain chemicals that are known to damage DNA and organ systems, and even cause cancer.
- Antibacterial products kill beneficial organisms and contribute to the creation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- None of the above is good for nature, or your body.

It's time to get off this merry-go-round and back to good old soap and water (and some other things).

### SOURCE

<http://www.lesstoxicguide.ca/index.asp?fetch=household#disi>



"My downtown restaurant is a member of both Green Table and Ocean Wise. We have strict recycling programs, practice water and energy reduction, and purchase from as many local purveyors as possible with a focus on organic and sustainable products. Some of the herbs we use are from my own garden, which I tend organically. I even compost my own enriched soil for the next season. I do this all on my patio."

*Andrew Wong, Owner, Wild Rice, Vancouver, BC*

[www.wildricevancouver.com](http://www.wildricevancouver.com)

*Green Table* [www.greentable.net](http://www.greentable.net)

*Ocean Wise* <http://www.oceanwise.ca/>

# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

**Objective:** encourage staff to purchase locally-grown food. Promote healthy eating, good conversation and fun!

**Name of activity:** The 100 Mile Lunch

**Time:** five lunch breaks

**What you need:** support from management, email announcement, a venue large enough to accommodate your staff meals, posters (sample ahead)

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## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Secure support from management.
2. Hook event to an actual office happening (e.g. wrap-up of a big project, seasonal celebration, a special anniversary, etc.)
3. Announce event at a staff meeting or via email.
4. Encourage staff to eat locally-grown food for an entire week. Provide information about local farmer's markets (<http://www.farmersmarketscanada.ca/Links.cfm>) and seasonal produce.
5. Wrap up with a potluck or catered lunch that celebrates local food.
6. If you are a large organization, try doing this at a team level first, and then move to larger groups.
7. Roll out the program to a weekly 100 Mile Lunch Club that lasts all year long! Once a week individuals take turns bringing meatless soups for all participants. OR everyone brings a locally-grown item (greens, chopped veggies, nuts, seeds, fruit, etc) to create a weekly salad bar.
8. Share photos, stories and successes. Learn and celebrate.

## RESOURCES

Community supported agriculture: Ontario – [www.csafarms.ca](http://www.csafarms.ca); Quebec – <http://www.equiterre.org/en/solutions-individuals>

Farmer's markets: [www.farmersmarketscanada.ca/Links.cfm](http://www.farmersmarketscanada.ca/Links.cfm)

Indoor plants:

[http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/kamal\\_meattle\\_on\\_how\\_to\\_grow\\_your\\_own\\_fresh\\_air.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/kamal_meattle_on_how_to_grow_your_own_fresh_air.html)

[http://awesome.goodmagazine.com/marketplace/010/010plants\\_for\\_health.html](http://awesome.goodmagazine.com/marketplace/010/010plants_for_health.html)

[http://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19930073077\\_1993073077.pdf](http://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19930073077_1993073077.pdf)

Stairway to health: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sth-evs/english/index-eng.php>

Sustainable seafood guide: [www.seachoice.org](http://www.seachoice.org)



THINK

**GLOBAL**

EAT

**LOCAL**



## GOAL 5 : CONSERVE WATER

### BACKGROUND

Less than one per cent of the fresh water on the planet is available as drinking water. In Canada, we are fortunate to have 20 per cent of the world's freshwater supply, but are second only to the U.S. in how much we waste. Canadians use about 1,400



glasses of water daily (about 340 liters). That's double the European average, and three times as much as nations who lead the world in using water wisely, such as Belgium, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

Since 2003, one in four Canadian municipalities has experienced water shortages, and climate change is expected to make things worse. Conserving water in your workplace means lower water bills, supporting water use in other areas (such as showers for bike-riding employees), and lower landscaping costs.

There are lots of things workplaces can do to help protect this invaluable resource, essential to all life.

### PURE DRINK OR PURE HYPE?

In 1999, the US Natural Resources Defense Council completed a four-year study of the bottled water industry, including its bacterial and chemical contamination problems and found:

- People spend from 240 to over 10,000 times more per gallon for bottled water than they typically do for tap water.
- Some bottled water contains bacterial contaminants, and several brands contain synthetic organic chemicals such as industrial solvents, chemicals from plastic, and the by-products of the chemical reaction between chlorine and organic matter in water, or inorganic contaminants such as arsenic, a known carcinogen.
- About a third of bottled water companies violate their own industry standards of water quality.

### SOURCE

Bottled Water; Pure Drink or Pure Hype?, Natural Resources Defense Council <http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/bwinx.asp>

*“Human beings, like most other terrestrial animals and plants, have an absolute need for fresh water – and that is the rarest form of water on Earth.”*

*—David Suzuki,  
The Sacred Balance*

### GET OFF BOTTLED WATER

Across the country, municipalities, school boards and other workplaces are opting out of bottled water, realizing that it's an unnecessary drain on the environment and their office budgets. A pitcher of iced tap water is an elegant, cost-saving and environmentally-friendly alternative.

### SOURCE

[www.insidethebottle.org](http://www.insidethebottle.org),  
[http://www.canadians.org/water/issues/Unbottle\\_It/index.html](http://www.canadians.org/water/issues/Unbottle_It/index.html)

### PROPERLY DISPOSE OF HAZARDOUS WASTE

Chemical compounds from cleaning products and fire retardants wind up in our rivers and streams, which affects ecosystem health and, ultimately, drinking water quality.

### SOURCE

[http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc\\_surfacewater.html](http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc_surfacewater.html)

**FIRST STEPS**

Ban bottled water. Challenge staff to 'Take Back the Tap' with the sample activity on page 61.

Repair leaky faucets and running toilets.

Replace worn washers at the first sign of wear.

Install low-flow heads on taps and in employee showers.

Adopt water conservation in the office kitchen and bathrooms:

Only turn the tap on when you have to while brushing teeth, washing dishes or hands.

Scrape dishes before loading them in the dishwasher, rather than rinsing.

Use economy settings on dishwashers.

Don't pour water down the drain that can be used for watering plants.

Keep a jug of water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run till the water is cold.

Only run the dishwasher when its fully loaded.

Educate staff on proper disposal of toxins – never down the drain or flushed.

Use only non-toxic products for office cleaning, dishwashing and bathroom soaps.

Encourage staff to bring stainless steel bottles for water to work, in lieu of water sold in plastic bottles.

**INTERMEDIATE**

Install taps with sensors and timers in office bathrooms and kitchen.

Replace standard toilets with high efficiency or dual flush models.

Check timing cycles and quantities on urinals, and adjust if necessary.

Purchase rain barrels and disconnect building downspouts to fill them.

Use a broom instead of a hose to clean off driveways, steps and

**WATER LOSSES**

The main culprits when it comes to wasting water are inefficient toilets, leaking faucets, water-guzzling appliances, taps running unnecessarily, and thirsty lawns. Organizations who don't adopt water conservation strategies are flushing hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars down the drain each year.

- A tap leaking one drop of water per second wastes close to 9,000 litres/year.
- A running tap uses about eight litres of water per minute.
- A running toilet wastes as much as 328,500 litres/year.
- Replacing wasteful toilets, showerheads, faucets and dishwashers with efficient versions can reduce water use by up to 75 per cent.

**SOURCE**

*The Green Guide, David Suzuki and David Boyd*

sidewalks.

If tap water isn't tasty, purchase filtered pitchers or in-sink filtration systems.

Consider a water-saving landscape:

Reduce your lawn's thirst through aeration, top dressing, organic fertilizers and proper mowing (no more than weekly, and set the blade to five to eight cm). You'll get hardier grass capable of surviving dry spells.

Grass naturally goes dormant during dry seasons, when water conservation is especially important, so let it go brown. A brown lawn means you care more about the planet than what the neighbours think.

#### **WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE**

Because water is used for manufacturing goods and growing food, practically everything you use on a daily basis has a water footprint. Check out this chart for ideas on where you can reduce yours:

<http://awesome.good.is/transparency/web/trans0309walkthisway.html>

## **TOWARD DEEP TRANSFORMATION**



Try xeriscaping – landscaping that relies mostly on rainfall:

Plant native species. There are no sprinkler systems in nature.

Replace lawns with groundcovers that don't need watering, or hardy indigenous species suited to your climate.

Mulch to retain moisture.

Collect rainwater and use that for watering.

Build in gray water systems that divert safe water from showers and taps to landscapes and gardens.

Install meters so staff can track their water use.

Adopt a zero toxic waste strategy for your all your physical plants, production and services.

If your workplace uses water in production processes, examine efficiencies and conserve where you can.

## RESOURCES

*Bottled Water; Pure Drink or Pure Hype?*, Natural Resources Defense Council:  
<http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/bwinx.asp>

Canadian Water and Wastewater Association: <http://www.cwwa.ca/>

Freshwater facts: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/eau-water/default.asp?lang=En&n=65EAA3F5-1>

*Message in a bottle*, David Suzuki and Faisal Moola  
<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/blogs/science-matters/2008/05/message-in-a-bottle/index.php>

Toronto Rain Barrel Guide  
[http://www.riversides.org/rainguide/riversides\\_hgr.php?cat=2&page=39&subpage=46](http://www.riversides.org/rainguide/riversides_hgr.php?cat=2&page=39&subpage=46)

Water use calculator: <http://www.us.kohler.com/savewater/calculators/commercial.htm>

Water conservation audit:  
<http://www.ose.state.nm.us/water-info/conservation/pdf-manuals/cii-users-guide.pdf>

## MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

- Bisphenol A, found in many plastic bottles commonly used in household and commercial water coolers, contains estrogens (human female hormones) and has been linked to breast and ovarian cancers and childhood developmental problems.
- Bottled water companies take tap water and sell it back to consumers at a markup that can be as high as 3,000 times the price paid through taxes. In Canada, Coca Cola filters and bottles water from municipal sources in Calgary and Brampton for its Dasani brand. Pepsi's Aquafina comes mostly from Vancouver and Mississauga.

## SOURCE

*Message in a bottle*,  
by David Suzuki and Faisal Moola  
<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/blogs/science-matters/2008/05/message-in-a-bottle/index.php>



# SAMPLE ACTIVITY

You can adapt this activity to the amount of time available and staff interest at your workplace.

- Objective:** reconnect people with value of public fresh water
- Name of activity:** Take Back the Tap!
- Time:** one hour
- What you need:** support from management, email announcement, poster (link to sample), one bottle of water (or water from your existing filtered water cooler), glasses and labels

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## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Secure support from management.
2. Purchase incentive prizes (or secure donations from neighbouring businesses – a great conversation starter!) Great prize ideas: time off work, movie tickets, commuter mugs, plants, stainless steel water bottle, low flow showerhead kit, gift certificates to local grocers, transit pass, packages of organic seeds, local wine.
3. At a staff meeting or via email, invite anyone interested to join in a friendly taste testing of bottled and tap water.
4. Discretely pour samples of water into different glasses, labelling tap water 'A' and bottled water 'B'. (OR, for extra drama, you can label the glasses outright and blindfold the tasters.)
5. Ask tasters to savour their sampling, taking time to balance the *"hints of glacier melt and natural filtration"* before choosing the winner.
6. Once all participants have had an opportunity to taste the water samples and have chosen their favourites, reveal which was the tap.
7. No matter which choice wins, this is an opportunity to talk about the benefits of switching to tap water.
8. Award prizes to the department with the most participants, the funniest individual, the person with the best suggestions, etc.
9. Share photos, stories and successes. Learn and celebrate.



**TAKE BACK  
THE TAP!**



## CONCLUSION

Green is already becoming the standard worldwide for organizations of all sizes and types. Customers are moving away from supporting companies that don't take climate change seriously, and employees want to work where good corporate citizenship is the norm.

Although this is new territory for many workplaces in Canada, there is no time like the present to get started.

Empower your employees to suggest improvements and reward them for their resource-saving ideas.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***How can my organization take part in David Suzuki at Work?***

It's easy! Visit our website (<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/green-your-workplace/invite-an-ambassador-to-work/>), and sign-up.

### ***How long does David Suzuki at Work take?***

This toolkit is modular, simple to use and easily tweaked to meet the unique needs of individual workplaces. We recommend doing a new activity each month, but you may find weekly works best for you, or even a different daily action that repeats on a cycle. The choice is yours.

### ***What does it cost to take David Suzuki to work?***

Close your eyes and tell me what you see. If you said nothing—you're absolutely right! In fact, you'll probably end up saving money by taking David Suzuki to work. Canadians want to work for organizations that share their personal values. *David Suzuki at Work* is a great way of getting everyone from the CEO to the office temp involved in treading gently on the earth. Your efforts will make a powerful statement about your organizational values. Besides, it's fun and it sure beats the heck out of another staff retreat with soggy cold cuts and three-legged races!

***If I already do the actions in this toolkit, do I still need to sign-up?***

Yes! It's great that you've already made changes in your life to protect the environment. Signing up means you'll join thousands of others in sending a powerful message to business and government leaders to incorporate the environment into their planning, and to develop policies that reward conservation. A healthier environment isn't possible unless we all get involved at all levels, not just at work or home. There is always strength in numbers.

***Why is this program focused only on individuals? What about governments and corporations?***

The David Suzuki Foundation is working to make Canada a world leader in sustainable living and environmental protection by 2030. To achieve this goal, people at all levels of society — individual, corporate and government — need to get involved. In our report, *Sustainability within a Generation* (<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Economy/Sustainability/>), we include targets and timelines that would transform Canada into a country with a clean, efficient 21st Century economy

***Are the ideas in this toolkit scientifically proven?***

Yes! To determine the most effective ways to protect nature, we used a model developed by the Union of Concerned Scientists, a U.S. environmental organization. Using Canadian data, we found that simple changes in our daily lives related to food, transport and energy use would make significant differences. For more detailed background, check out our *Green Guide* ([http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Publications/Green\\_guide.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Publications/Green_guide.asp)). We've also included sections on waste and water in this toolkit, because simple changes in these areas can have an enormous positive effect on the health of the planet.

***Is there a French version of the toolkit?***

Not yet. But we've now got a Montreal office, a French language website <http://www.davidsuzuki.qc.ca/> and our monthly newsletter has a French edition. Sign up for that here: <http://www.davidsuzuki.qc.ca/relevezed/inscrivezv>.



# SAMPLE LETTER TO SECURE SUPPORT FROM MANAGEMENT

**To:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject: Let's bring David Suzuki to work!**

Sustainability has become a buzzword for most businesses in the 21st Century. Customers and clients want to know they are doing business with an organization that makes sound decisions and advances social welfare.

The David Suzuki Foundation understands that we have a business to run and that we want to give our customers value for their money. To help organizations like ours reward conservation and eliminate waste, they've developed *David Suzuki at Work*.

The program outlines the most effective actions individuals can take to protect nature. Hundreds of thousands of people have joined the community and are making a difference in their daily lives to make Canada more sustainable. We can, too.

*David Suzuki at Work* is designed to make it easy for businesses to make their workplaces more eco-friendly while inspiring staff, suppliers and clients to make a difference for the environment.

Here are just some of the benefits:

- People want workplaces that reflect their personal values. Morale will improve.
- We'll be associated with the David Suzuki Foundation, an organization that Canadians trust.
- We'll help protect the health of the planet for future generations.
- Shareholders and investors will applaud our corporate responsibility, as will our customers, clients and suppliers.
- We'll reduce waste, which will help make us more efficient.
- By promoting our earth-friendly actions to our clients, customers and suppliers, we'll move our networks toward a greener and more sustainable future.
- Best of all, it won't cost anything. In fact, this program will save us time and money.

This is an opportunity to really make an important difference. Let's bring David Suzuki to work and get started!

# SAMPLE LETTER / EMAIL TO STAFF

## **Subject: Let's bring David Suzuki to work!**

With all the interest in the environment, more Canadians are looking at the way they live and work.

Many people want to make a difference. They recycle at home, and purchase eco-friendly products to protect the health of their loved ones. But they are also frustrated that the organizations they work for don't reflect their personal values.

At (*NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION*), we want to do something about that. The David Suzuki Foundation has developed a program to get people involved in making small changes that will have a big effect on protecting nature.

*David Suzuki at Work* is easy. Once a month we'll try a different activity here in the office. At the end we'll collect some feedback from you to find out what you liked about the activity, what you didn't, and get some other ideas to make it more enjoyable. We can also decide which of these challenges we'll keep doing once the month is over.

This isn't about turning you into a sandal-wearing hippie. It's all about small steps we can take in our daily lives to make the world a better place. After all, we spend a good portion of our lives here at work. And the changes we make here have a huge effect on the environment.

Our organization values a healthy workplace, and we realize that we play a role in bringing together passionate individuals each day. We can start making some small changes to protect nature. We think you'll be pleased to see that these actions don't require a huge time commitment from your busy day. In fact, you'll barely notice it. But the planet will.

We'll be keeping in touch with you about what we're doing through the company intranet, email, and office bulletin boards. If you have ideas about how we can get started on making some simple changes around the office, please come and talk to me.

Thanks for your support.