

# Green Tips for Creating A Sustainable Workplace



Want to reduce your business' environmental impact but don't know where to start? Check out these top ten tips from [BC Green Business](#) for practical and affordable ways that you can have a positive impact on the environment while enhancing workplace efficiency.

## Why Go Green?



### Cost Savings

Identify operational efficiencies that result in short- and long-term cost savings.



### Brand Appeal

Attract values-aligned customers and stakeholders.



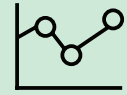
### Stay Competitive

Stay ahead of the curve by factoring in regulations ahead of your competitors.



### Staff Retention

Attract and retain employees who go beyond for the planet, people, and community.



### Attract Investment

Appeal to funders seeking long-term, sustainable, and innovative projects.

## 1 Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED

Energy-efficient light bulbs last up to 25 times longer, don't contain harmful chemicals, and use up to 90% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs. Check out BC Hydro's ["Choosing the right light" chart](#) to learn more.

## 2 Encourage low-emissions commuting for staff

Implementing incentives such as flexible work schedules, on-site bike storage facilities, annual bike maintenance certificates, and subsidized public transport passes can inspire your team to make greener choices, contributing to a collective effort in building a more environmentally conscious workplace. Apply for a [Transit-Friendly Employer](#) certificate if you provide at least a 50% transit subsidy for your employees. Open a [Business Account](#) with Evo for conducting work trips.

## 3 Establish a purchasing policy

Implement a Purchasing Policy that applies a sustainability lens. Incorporate [ENERGY STAR](#) certified office equipment and appliances, used furniture, [recycled paper](#) products and [ECOLOGO](#)® or [Green Seal](#)® certified cleaning supplies.

## 4 Set thermostats to 16°C when space is unoccupied

In winter, turn down the heat to 16°C rather than completely off to save energy when bringing the room back up to temperature. Turning the thermostat down by 2°C to 3°C for 8 hours a day from its normal setting can save you [up to 10% a year](#) on heating.





## 5 Set up waste diversion stations

Designate a space to place [clearly labelled bins](#) for different waste streams.

**Recycling:** Mixed paper, rigid plastics and tin, soft plastics, glass containers, corrugated cardboard, foam packaging, electronics, and pens.

**Compost:** Food scraps, coffee ground and tea bags, paper towels.

**Landfill:** Only items that cannot be recycled or composted.

## 6 Insulate your hot water pipes

Locate your hot water tank and check to see if the copper pipes carrying hot water are insulated. If they are not, use foam or another [insulating material](#) and DIY the insulation. [Up to 4%](#) of the energy used for water heating is lost moving water from the tank to your faucets.

## 7 Install low-flow aerators

Check the [water flow rate](#) of the faucets in your office. According to most guidelines, the flow rate must be below 5.7L/min to be considered low. If your flow rate is considerably higher, purchase a [low flow aerator](#) that fits your faucet and start saving water without compromising the pressure.

## 8 Install motion sensors or post “Lights Off” signage

Consider installing motion sensor light switches or place “lights off” signage underneath the existing light switches in the less frequented areas such as the bathrooms, utilities closets, and boardrooms. Simple signage can contribute to behavioural change amongst the staff that will result in energy savings.

## 9 Replace paper towels with hand towels or efficient dryers

Switch to washable hand towels or energy-efficient hand dryers in your washrooms and discontinue your use of paper towels. This will significantly reduce waste and save you money spent on disposable paper towel in the long-run.

## 10 Create a Green Team

Engage your staff in your sustainability initiatives by forming a Green Team. The designated team can meet regularly to focus on reducing waste, implementing energy efficient technologies or techniques, and ensuring responsible sourcing of materials. Check out the [David Suzuki Foundation’s guide](#) to get started.

