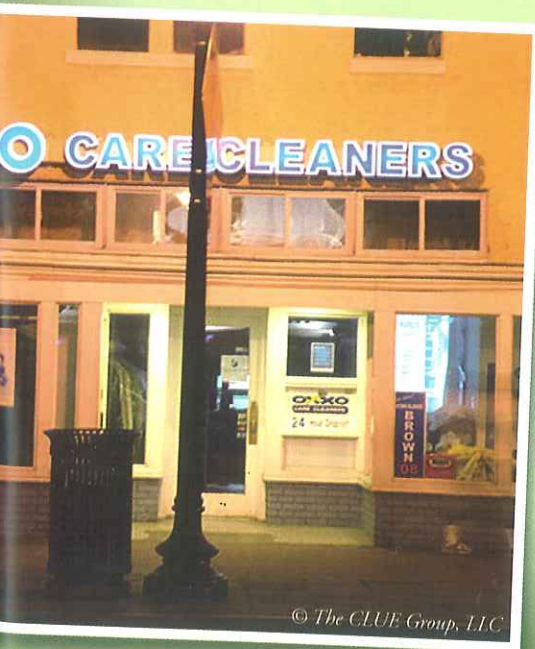


40 Things A Business Can Do

Many of the environmentally friendly improvements businesses can make in their operations are specific to the type of business. Grocery stores, for example, might switch to more energy-efficient refrigerators and freezers; laundries might use equipment that filters and reuses water rather than discarding it, and restaurants could buy local produce, instead of shipping it in from greater distances. But there are also a number of things that almost all businesses can do to operate in a more environmentally sustainable way. Here are 40 easy ideas:

- 1 Put storefront window display lights on timers to provide lighting until 10:00 pm or so instead of leaving lights on all night.
- 2 Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs.
- 3 Reduce the amount of packaging used for customers' purchases.
- 4 Recycle the boxes and packing material in which merchandise is shipped to the store.
- 5 Offer a small discount to customers who bring and use their own bags.
- 6 Ask product manufacturers and wholesalers from whom you buy merchandise to reduce the amount of packaging they use for their products.
- 7 Offer in-store recycling for products you sell.
- 8 Offer in-store workshops on sustainability related to your business. For example, a clothing store might offer a workshop on making messenger bags out of discarded clothing.
- 9 Use a programmable thermostat.
- 10 Buy as much of your merchandise and as many supplies and services locally as possible.
- 11 Install LED exit signs.
- 12 Use occupancy sensors to activate light fixtures in storage rooms, bathrooms, and other rooms and spaces that are vacant for long periods of time.
- 13 Use motion sensors to activate interior and exterior security lights.
- 14 Recycle any byproducts your business produces.
- 15 Install high-efficiency toilets.
- 16 Develop a written environmental vision statement and make it available to your customers.
- 17 Develop a written sustainability policy and require your employees to become familiar with it.
- 18 Ask your suppliers and service providers to share their sustainability policies with you. If they don't have one, ask that they develop one.
- 19 Provide incentives to encourage employees to commute to work by public transportation, carpooling, biking, or walking.
- 20 Provide a secure space where employees can store their bicycles during the workday.
- 21 Provide showers and lockers for employees who bike, run, or walk to work.
- 22 Use recycled paper.
- 23 Offer deliveries on foot or by bicycle within the Main Street district.
- 24 If your community has a "Buy Local First" program, participate in it. If it doesn't have one, help start one.
- 25 Buy renewable energy through utility companies. If your utility company does not offer renewable energy, buy energy offset credits.
- 26 Use power strips with on-off switches and turn the entire power strip off when the items plugged into it aren't being used.
- 27 Use Energy Star-rated equipment.
- 28 Use non-toxic cleaning supplies.
- 29 Use double-sided copying to conserve paper.
- 30 Recycle toner and inkjet cartridges from computer printers, fax machines, and copy machines.
- 31 Donate unused, nonreturnable items to local nonprofit organizations rather than throwing them away.
- 32 If your business uses cars or trucks, switch to hybrid, electric, or other vehicles that minimize use of fossil fuels.
- 33 If your business has more than one location, use conference calls or web-based video calls to minimize the need to drive to meetings.
- 34 Use low-Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints, coatings, adhesives, and sealants.
- 35 When you have items printed, specify that your printer use low-VOC inks.
- 36 Sell products made from recycled and/or re-sourced materials.
- 37 Use electronic media – e-mail, phone calls, websites – instead of printed flyers or letters to reach your customers and promote your business.
- 38 Use your storefront window display to promote sustainability and sustainable uses of your business's products and services.
- 39 Help customers reduce the amount of time they spend driving by learning about products and services offered by other businesses in your commercial district. When a customer asks if you know where they can find an item your business doesn't offer, refer them to another store in the district.
- 40 Replace paper towels in employee restrooms with reusable cloth towels.



OXXO, a "green" dry cleaner with stores in Washington, D.C., Florida, and New Jersey, uses environmentally friendly cleaning products.

ONLINE ONLY

For more information about greening your Main Street district, visit our website, www.mainstreet.org/msnews and read Kennedy Smith's article "Greening Public Spaces."