



NIH Environmental Management System

To Protect the Future, Take Action Into Your Hands

Thank you for participating in the Go Greener Office Challenge!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Go Greener Office Challenge

1. Why is the Go Greener Office Challenge being conducted?

To evaluate our office practices to determine how "green" they are and to identify opportunities to reduce the environmental impacts of our office activities.

2. Where can I find the results?

Overall results will be posted at <http://nems.nih.gov/>.

General Energy Conservation

3. What is a CFL?

CFL stands for compact fluorescent light bulb, and it is a small fluorescent light bulb that uses 75% less energy than a traditional incandescent bulb and can be screwed into a regular light socket. More information on CFLs can be found at http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr_cfls.

4. Why should I use compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs)?

Switching from traditional light bulbs to CFLs is an effective, accessible change to reduce energy use and prevent greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change. Changing to CFLs costs little upfront and provides a quick return on investment. *If every home in America replaced just one incandescent light bulb with an Energy Star® qualified CFL, it would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes and prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than 800,000 cars annually.*

5. How do I properly dispose of CFLs?

Because CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, they should never be placed in the garbage. If you need to dispose of a CFL at NIH, contact Chemical Waste Disposal at 301-496-4710 for collection and proper disposal. At home, local options include Ikea, Staples, and Home Depot. See <http://www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling/> for more options.

Energy Conservation

6. Why should I turn off my computer and monitor every night?

Computers will not be damaged by powering on and off if purchased in the last 10 years. Today's PCs are designed to handle 40,000 on/off cycles before a failure, and that's a number you likely won't reach during the computer's five-to-seven-year life span.

7. What is Energy Star®?

Energy Star® is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy. It is a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Energy Star® label can be found in over 50 product categories including major appliances, office equipment, lighting, and home electronics. When procuring equipment, always look for the Energy Star® label. For more information, visit <http://www.energystar.gov/>.

8. How can I enable my computer's Energy Star® features?

You can help conserve energy by activating the power management features in Energy Star® computers and monitors, which will enter into a low-power or sleep mode when not in use. This has to be done by you or your IT representative otherwise the computer will not power down. Visit <http://www.nems.nih.gov/teams/PowerDown-ComputersMonitors.pdf> to learn how to enable the Energy Star® features on your computer.





Recycled Content in Office Products

7. Why does the paper used in copiers and printers have to contain at least 30% post-consumer recycled content? Why do other office paper products (e.g., folders, notepads, self-stick notes) have to contain post-consumer recycled content?

A number of important requirements address the purchase of recovered material (recycled-content) products by federal facilities, including the Federal Acquisition Regulation and EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG). These requirements mandate federal agencies to use copy paper with at least 30% post-consumer recycled content, and office paper products with between 10 and 30% post-consumer recycled content, depending on the product.

8. What is the difference between "recycled content" and "post-consumer recycled content"?

The term "post-consumer" refers to end products that have been used by the consumer and then separated from wastes for the purpose of recycling. Post-consumer materials include materials recycled both by households as well as non-residential end-users such as offices, grocery stores, and restaurants. Distinct from post-consumer content is "pre-consumer" content (often referred to as just "recycled content"), which includes waste left over from converting and printing processes, prior to use by an end-consumer.

Recycling

9. What can I recycle in the All Paper Products Recycling Bins on the Bethesda Campus?

White or colored paper, newspaper, magazines, scientific journals, hard and soft-back books, telephone books, 3-ring binders, self-stick notes, envelopes, manila folders, and paperboard (e.g., tissue and paper towel boxes).

10. What can I recycle in the Commingled Recycling Bins on the Bethesda Campus?

The following items may be recycled in the Commingled Recycling Bins:

- Plastic Products (Resin Grades #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, **but not #6**)* - Empty containers of any shape and size, detergent bottles, food storage containers, retail plastic bags, blister packs, shrink wrap, bubble wrap, trash can liners, and food bags
- Glass bottles and jars*
- Aluminum Cans and Foil*
- Steel and Tin Cans*

* Recycling is mandatory in Montgomery County for these items

11. Can I recycle toner and inkjet cartridges?

Yes. For each usable toner or inkjet cartridge recycled, NIH Charities receive \$1. Look for the bins marked Toner/Inkjet Cartridge Recycling.

12. Where can I get more Recycling Bins?

For more information on recycling, please contact Mark Marshall, at 301-496-7990, or marshallma@mail.nih.gov, or visit the DEP website at <http://orf.od.nih.gov/Environmental+Protection/Waste+Disposal/recycling.htm>.

Transportation

13. What is the Transshare program?

The NIH Transshare Program is the transportation incentive program for NIH employees. The program includes a variety of alternative transportation modes such as vanpools, Metro, MARC Trains, and public buses. The program offers qualified employees the option to receive assistance with employee out-of-pocket commuting costs incurred through the use of mass transportation and vanpools, not to exceed the maximum monthly level allowed, which is currently up to \$110.00. For more information on Transshare and other forms of transportation visit <http://dtt.ors.od.nih.gov/transshare.htm>.

Additional Information

14. How can I get involved with greening NIH?

Do you have a tip or information that will help *NIH Go Greener*? Send it to green@mail.nih.gov. Also, join the NIH Greenserve where employees share environmental ideas and questions. Visit <https://list.nih.gov/archives/greenserve-1.html> to join.

15. Where can I get more information?

To get more information on what NIH is doing to green its activities, visit the NIH Environmental Management System (NEMS) website at www.nems.nih.gov or contact Terry Leland, NEMS Coordinator, at 301-496-7775, or lelandt@mail.nih.gov.

See if your IC has a green team and if not, think about starting one!

