

## Go Greener Office Challenge

### Introduction

The Go Greener Office Challenge is an initiative to baseline how “green” our office activities are while identifying opportunities for offices to minimize their environmental impacts and become more sustainable. The challenge is designed to train evaluators how to use a specially designed evaluation form that can be used to baseline how environmentally sound the activities are within a particular office space and to use that data to provide a particular score or rating. This information will be used to identify how well we are conducting our office activities and help us prioritize our opportunities to improve.

The Go Greener Office Challenge Evaluation Worksheet is a tool to evaluate an office, division, center, or institute on how well they are conducting their administrative activities in a manner protective of the environment and public health. The evaluation includes a walk-through survey and employee interviews. This evaluation will determine if office-related activities are occurring in an environmentally sound way, indicate how “green” these activities are, and identify opportunities for improvement.

The Go Greener Office Challenge is being used for multiple purposes:

- **Outreach and Communications.** The evaluation creates an opportunity to provide employees with information on how they can conduct their office activities in a way protective of the environment and public health. To complete the evaluation, a manager or designate will walk through the office suite/workspace and interact with employees to assess how green the evaluated unit is. This interaction will provide an opportunity to inform employees on ways to green their daily activities and for an employee to inquire about issues or concerns related to the environment.
- **Baseline and Performance Analysis.** Since the evaluation includes quantitative analysis, the data will be used to baseline office activities and to perform periodic checks to track improvements in performance. The evaluation examines multiple components of an office environment and rates how green each component is. After completing just one evaluation, the evaluator can identify successes and opportunities for improvement performance. Follow-up evaluations can determine if outreach or other actions taken to encourage employees to green office activities were effective and improve the office's rating. We should strive for continued improvement in environmental performance, and this tool will help gauge our success.

### How to Conduct the Challenge

The Go Greener Office Challenge Evaluation Worksheet is designed to be completed during working hours and, if possible, after work hours. An Excel-based calculator is used to determine the office's rating. The evaluation consists of a walk-through survey that requires you to investigate the office suite and perform random interviews of office occupants. Please see the Evaluation Worksheet in this toolkit for detailed instructions on how to conduct the walk-through survey, the employee interviews, and the Ratings Calculator to determine the overall rating.

Upon completion of the Worksheet, you will transfer your findings to the Excel document entitled Ratings Calculator. You should enter the totals for each question in the Ratings Calculator. The Excel document will automatically calculate the office suite's rating. When all findings are entered into the Ratings Calculator, please complete the following:

- Email a copy of the Ratings Calculator (Excel document) to the Green Team Lead , **AND**
- Turn in a copy of the Evaluation Worksheet by sending via inter-office mail or by scanning and emailing the document to the Green Team Lead.

### Determination of the Ratings

Once the evaluation is completed, the findings noted in the Evaluation Worksheet are transferred to the Ratings Calculator to determine how “green” our office activities are. A description of the Go Greener ratings is provided in the table below.

<b>Go Greener Score</b>	<b>Calculator Code</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>71 - 100%</b>	<b>Green</b>		<i>Excellent</i> The office/workspace is green. Keep up the good work and continue to identify opportunities to reduce waste.
<b>41 – 70%</b>	<b>Yellow</b>		<i>Fair</i> You are doing a good job but making some easy changes will further reduce your impacts on the environment.
<b>40% or less</b>	<b>Red</b>		<i>Poor</i> It is time to look at your activities to see how you can reduce your environmental impacts. Be sure to reevaluate in a few months.

For each question, a percentage score is calculated based on an average of the evaluation’s findings. The higher the score, the greener the office practices are. From these scores, an overall average rating for the evaluated unit is determined by the Ratings Calculator. This overall rating provides a snapshot of how green the office-related activities are at the time of the evaluation. Additionally, a rating for each section of the evaluation (e.g., energy conservation, recycling) is provided. This will allow an evaluator to identify opportunities for improvement.

### Contents of the Go Greener Office Challenge Toolkit

The contents of this toolkit are described below.

- Go Greener Office Challenge Schedule:** The schedule is meant to assist the Green Team Lead in outlining the order of activities necessary to train evaluators on how to use the Go Greener assessment materials. This schedule also includes a suggested timeline and recommended resources to conduct the activities.
- Email Template:** Before the evaluations begin, an email should be sent out from the Director to all IC employees announcing the upcoming evaluations. A sample email template has been provided for your use.
- Evaluation Worksheet:** This is the document that is used by an evaluator to score how green the office practices are. As the evaluator surveys the office and interviews occupants, this document will be filled out using tick marks based on YES or NO answers.
- Ratings Calculator:** Once the evaluator completes the assessment and fills out the Evaluation Worksheet, he/she will enter the total number of YES, NO, and N/A findings for each question into the Excel-based Ratings Calculator. This document will automatically calculate the ranking for each question, each section, each part, and the overall score for office environmental performance.
- Evaluation Reference Materials:** Detailed information to assist an evaluator in completing the Evaluation Worksheet is provided in the toolkit. These materials also provide instructions on how to answer and/or verify some of the evaluation questions.
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** During the evaluation, employees who are interviewed may have questions about the evaluation topics and inquire about how to green their office practices. The FAQ can be distributed to answer some of the most common questions resulting from the evaluation.

7. **Fact Sheets:** Additional information on energy conservation, greener transportation options, and other green office practices is provided in fact sheets developed by the NIH Environmental Management System (NEMS). Copies of pertinent fact sheets are provided online at [nems.nih.gov](http://nems.nih.gov).

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