



# GREEN BUSINESS LEADERS

## Home Office Guide

Washington County's Green Business Award recognizes an organization's efforts in waste prevention and recycling, toxics reduction, and water and energy conservation. This guide will help you apply those practices to your home office. We hope it inspires you to think about even more ways to make your home office more sustainable. Use this guide to track the practices that you have already completed or are planning to complete.



## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- I use paperless alternatives whenever possible (paystubs, account statements, etc.).
- I completed a [home waste audit](#) within the past 12 months. Date of audit and key takeaways: \_\_\_\_\_
- My computers and printers are set to print double-sided by default. If this feature is not available on your printer, you can choose to [manually print on both sides of the paper](#).
- I use major paper supplies (toilet paper, printer/copier paper, envelopes, etc.) that contain at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.
- I recycle at least one additional material (batteries, plastic bags, Styrofoam, etc.) beyond basic mixed recycling, yard debris and glass. Our [What to recycle and where tool](#) can help!
- I compost my food scraps in a curbside cart (*with yard debris if food scraps collection is available in your area*) or in a backyard composter/compost pile.

- I have signed up for or already taken the [Eat Smart, Waste Less](#) challenge.
- I use a zero-waste meal kit (reusable straw and utensils, cup/water bottle, food storage, etc.) and avoid single use items most of the time.
- I completed a [fridge waste audit](#) within the past 12 months. Key takeaways:
 

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- I use rechargeable batteries in most devices that require batteries (keyboard, mouse, calculator, etc.).
- I donate surplus items, such as furniture, electronics, clothing and school/office supplies, to charitable organizations or other individuals for reuse.
- I buy used items or borrow instead of purchasing new as much as possible ([tool libraries](#), Buy Nothing Groups, [Habitat Restore](#), [Goodwill](#), etc.).
- I display art made with reclaimed or reused materials.
- I regularly reuse or repurpose items instead of throwing them out (soup cans as pen holders; old clothes into rags; takeout containers into food storage; etc.).
- I buy in bulk when possible to avoid unnecessary packaging.
- I calculated my [ecological footprint](#) within the past 12 months. Key takeaways:
 

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- I have taken a [gardening course](#) (online or in person, any topic) or started a new gardening project within the past twelve months.
- I have a garden (raised beds, containers, etc.) where I grow my own produce or herbs.
- I repaired a household item (lamp, vacuum, office chair, appliance, etc.) myself or had it repaired at a community repair event within the past twelve months.
- I live at an apartment/condo. I have confirmed that the bins serviced by the garbage collection company are accessible and properly labeled. I know [who to contact](#) if I need new stickers or signs or if my community needs help making improvements to our recycling.
- I have [opted out](#) of receiving junk mail, unwanted catalogs and unsolicited credit card offers.



## Toxics Reduction & Healthy Homes

- I use [Third-party certified](#) green cleaning products and/or green [cleaning products are made using](#) household ingredients (vinegar, baking soda, etc.).
- I've taught someone else how to make their own [green cleaning products](#) within the past 12 months.

- I have plants inside my home to improve indoor air quality and make my home more enjoyable. *Limited on space? Try a few herbs on a windowsill!*
- I've used recycled-content or Green Seal-certified paint, such as [MetroPaint](#) in the last year.
- I use an [EcoBiz](#)-certified landscaping company or I use chemical-free, natural landscaping practices like grass-cycling and leaf-cycling.
- I go to an [EcoBiz](#)-certified auto maintenance and repair company.
- I safely store and properly recycle [fluorescent light tubes and compact fluorescent lightbulbs](#) (CFLs). Find out where [to recycle these items](#).
- I safely store and properly recycle potentially hazardous products like paints, solvents, and cleaners. Find out where [to recycle these items](#).



## Water

- I have enlisted a third-party water conservation program to perform a [water conservation audit](#) in the last three years, or I have done a [do-it-yourself water audit](#) within the last twelve months. Date of [audit](#): \_\_\_\_\_
- My home's interior faucets, shower heads, toilets and exterior hoses [do not drip or leak](#).
- I use a water efficient [showerhead](#) or [requested a free one](#) from my water provider.
- My kitchen [faucet aerator](#) has a flow rate of 1.5 gallons per minute or less.
- My restroom faucet aerator has a flow rate of 0.5 gallons per minute.
- My toilets are [WaterSense](#)-approved or use 1.28 gallons per flush or less.
- My landscaping is [northwest native](#), drought tolerant and does not require irrigation.
- I manage [stormwater on-site](#) through cistern, rain barrels, bioswales, rain garden, permeable pavers, etc.
- My home is certified as a [Backyard Habitat](#). Certification date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Energy

- My computers, computer monitors and printers are set to sleep after 15 minutes of inactivity.

- I use [“Smart” power strips](#) or power strips are placed in easy-to-reach locations (such as the desktop) and switched off at night.
- I use [programmable thermostats](#) to automatically reduce heating and air conditioning. As an alternative to buying a programmable thermostat, I set my thermostat to 68 to save energy and heating costs.
- I have completed a [home energy audit](#) within the past 12 months or have received an energy audit through either Energy Trust of Oregon or a third-party energy firm within the past five years. Date of audit: \_\_\_\_\_
- I’ve shared information about [multifamily cash incentives](#) from EnergyTrust with my property manager and requested that they schedule a free walk through to identify energy-efficiency opportunities at my property.
- I regularly conduct maintenance checks on HVAC systems and equipment. If I rent, I’ve asked my property manager how often they complete maintenance checks.
- My water heater is set to 120 degrees.
- My home’s windows are double-pane or better, vinyl or [weather sealed](#) to prevent drafts.
- My home’s doors have [weather sealing](#) or under-door [draft stoppers](#).
- My home’s lighting is dimmed or turned off when adequate sunlight is available.
- My home’s lighting uses either [LED](#) or [CFL](#) bulbs.
- I purchase renewable energy for a portion of my home’s electric use or solar panels are in use on my home or apartment building.
- I set my home’s [ceiling fans](#) to rotate clockwise in winter (heating months) and counter-clockwise in summer.
- I have at least one appliance that is [ENERGY STAR®](#) certified.



## Transportation & Wellness

- I walk, bike, carpool, or take transit for work-related travel.
- I have participated in a drive less/transportation challenge within the past 12 months (Love to Ride Oregon, [Oregon Get There Challenge](#), etc.).
- I replaced my commute time with exercise, meditation/mindfulness or other wellness routine at least three days a week.
- I own an electric or hybrid vehicle or use a car sharing program instead of owning a car.

- I spend at least 2 hours per week in nature or outside, such as a neighborhood walk, picnic or a hike.



## Employee Engagement & Equity

- I support local businesses owned by Black, Indigenous and other People of Color. I find businesses at [Mercatus](#), [My People's Market](#) and the [COBID directory of businesses](#).
- I've participated in a training about equity, diversity and inclusion within the past year.
- I have attended community events and/or join public conversations about racial equity.
- I have completed the [Master Recycler training](#) course. Class number: \_\_\_\_\_
- I educate myself about sustainability best practices by reading books, listening to podcasts, attending webinars, etc. at least once a month.
- I have participated in an [EcoChallenge](#), or something similar, within the past year. Challenge dates: \_\_\_\_\_



## Community Engagement

- I am pursuing or currently serve in a community leadership role (business association, government advisory committee, neighborhood association, parent-teacher association, homeowners association, etc.).
- I have volunteered for or donated to a community organization or nonprofit within the past 12 months.
- I support local farmers by participating in a community supported agriculture (CSA) program or a similar program, or by shopping at local [farmers markets](#).
- I have participated in a neighborhood or community event within the past two years (clean up event, neighborhood association meeting, block party, etc.).
- I've answered a [recycling question](#) for someone in my neighborhood or community within the past 12 months, either in person, on the phone, or online.

