

# Greening Your Non-MIT Department

## Information to Drive More Sustainable Office Practices

- **Determine who the building manager is to help with sustainable practices**
- **Recycling**
  - Determine if your building has a recycling program and who manages it
  - Work with the building manager to determine how recyclables are collected
  - Appoint an MIT Recycling Ambassador through the Working Group Recycling Committee (WGR)
  - Ensure each desk has a desk-side paper recycling bin
  - Ensure your office space has the appropriate number and types of bins for recycling (co-mingled, paper, plastic bags, toner cartridges, etc) and are properly labeled
  - Place recycling bins at locations w/ trash cans to make it easy, if possible
  - Designate areas for cardboard boxes and break down if necessary
  - Visit the WGR and Dept. of Facilities websites for other ideas and suggestions  
<http://web.mit.edu/workinggreen/> and  
<http://web.mit.edu/facilities/environmental/recycling.html>
- **Office Supply and Equipment Purchasing**
  - Purchase office products made from recycled materials and/or designed to be recycled
  - Check out the Office Depot Green Book for supplies or  
<http://web.mit.edu/workinggreen/buy/atmit.html> for additional ideas
  - Purchase only Energy Star rated equipment for the office
- **Catering**
  - Promote more sustainable food services when organizing events and minimize waste
  - Choose caterers specializing in sustainable and organic services
  - Minimize single use, disposable products and service ware
  - Check out additional tips on WGR site for greening your catered events & meetings  
<http://web.mit.edu/workinggreen/buy/meeting.html>
- **Energy Conservation**
  - Ask your building manager how electric bills paid in the building
  - Determine if there are incentives for reducing a tenant's energy use
  - Lower your thermostat in winter and increase it in the summer
  - Turn off lights when not in use, especially at the end of the day
  - Put computers on sleep/hibernate mode and turn monitors off when not in use
  - Adjust blinds for natural light during the day & to control heat generated during the summer and winter months
  - Contact building managers immediately for heating/cooling issues and follow-up with requests
  - Minimize the use of portable electric devices, such as heaters, mini-refrigerators, fans
  - Use revolving doors when available
  - Unplug energy draining equipment when not in use (cell phone chargers, coffee makers, etc) or put them on a power-strip and turn on only when needed
  - Turn off photocopy machines at the end of the day or use the energy saving mode

- **Transportation**

- Encourage employees to walk, bike or take the T to work
- Encourage employees to use MIT's transportation demand management programs including: subsidized T-Passes, Ride Share and Van Pool services, Guaranteed Ride Home, etc. (<http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/commuting/index.html>)
- Get a departmental ZipCar membership (<http://www.zipcar.com/mit/>)
- Use PlanetTran for taxi services (<http://www.planettran.com/index.php>)

- **Reduce and Reuse**

- Print double-sided on recycled paper and establish as default printer setting
- Conduct a donation drive in the office: donate unwanted clothes, books, electronics, furniture, etc. to a local charity
- Replace bottled water service with filtered tap water
- Buy only what you need
- Utilize [reuse@mit.edu](mailto:reuse@mit.edu) to post unwanted materials to the MIT community, (<http://web.mit.edu/workinggreen/reuse/reuse.html>)
- Utilize MIT free food networks for event leftovers via [freefood@mit.edu](mailto:freefood@mit.edu) and [free-food@mit.edu](mailto:free-food@mit.edu)

- **Other Ideas**

- Create a green team to drive progress and increase participation
- Establish contests for best new ideas, individual champions, etc.
- Conduct an environmental audit/assessment of your office
- Calculate your office's carbon footprint
- Share your experience with the MIT community and beyond

**Resources:**

- Working Green at MIT (WGR) - <http://web.mit.edu/workinggreen/index.html>
- Environment Health & Safety Office - <http://mit.edu/environment/reduce/index.html>
- Department of Facilities - <http://web.mit.edu/facilities/environmental/index.html>
- Energy Star - <http://www.energystar.gov/>
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/>