

# Eco-efficiency

## for Small Business

# Retail



**ecoBiz** is the Environmental Protection Agency's signature partnership program with Queensland business and industry. **ecoBiz** can help your business to achieve cost savings and take advantage of the profitability of improved environmental performance.

This fact sheet will broaden your environmental awareness as well as provide you with money-saving eco-efficiency tips that you can implement in your shop.

We encourage you to discuss the environmental and economic benefits of the proposed eco-efficiency changes with your staff to generate enthusiasm for the program.

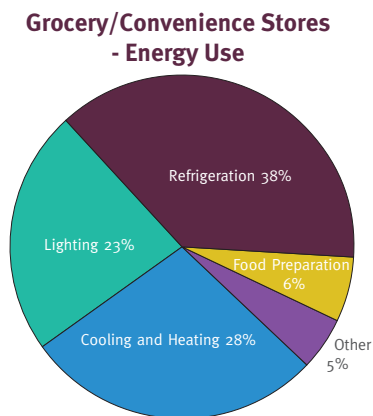
Consider setting up an in-house team to identify opportunities and discuss the way ahead. Staff that are engaged and motivated will be an invaluable source of ideas for improvements that could be made in your shop.

Train your staff on the aims of the ecoBiz program and how they can best convey sustainability messages to your customers.

Find a 'champion' to place signs around your workplace to inform staff and customers of the eco-efficient changes you have made.

## Energy - power to control what you spend

Maintaining adequate lighting and a comfortable temperature within your shop is important to customer comfort, worker productivity and, in some instances, product quality. The energy your shop uses can take a big bite out of your operating budget.



### Energy saving tips for your shop:

- The average computer uses approximately 100-120W per hour (or 0.1kW), with the monitor using up to 50% of that total. Where practical, purchase small monitors or ensure your monitor is set to automatically hibernate if left unused for more than 15 minutes.
- LCD screens use approximately half as much electricity as a CRT of equivalent size. The energy consumption of LCD screens can be reduced by half as much again by reducing the brightness of the screen.
- Use natural ventilation and fans where possible.
- If air-conditioning is used, close all windows and doors to reduce the escape of cool air.
- Switch off heating and cooling after hours.
- Set air-conditioner systems to a minimum of 24°C in summer and 19°C in winter and recirculate air to minimise costs.
- Switch off all lighting after hours and in areas such as store rooms that are not going to be used for at least 10 minutes. Using separate light switches for different areas in your shop allows this to occur easily.
- Install movement sensors or timer switches in areas such as store rooms and kitchenettes, to reduce light usage.

- Switch off display lights in fridges after hours. Display lights can account for up to 50% of the energy running costs for the machine.

### *Ever wondered whether to switch off a light when you leave the room?*

Turning on a fluorescent light uses the same amount of energy as running it for five seconds.

Fluorescent lights can be switched on approximately 6600 times before they will fail to start.

The economic reality is that if you are leaving the room for more than 10 minutes, switch it off.

- Replace traditional incandescent bulbs with fluorescent lights to reduce running costs by up to 75%. Fluorescent lights produce much less heat than incandescent lights so you would also save on cooling costs in summer.



- Turn off equipment and appliances when they are not in use.
- Consider the use of photo-electric (PE) sensors to balance natural and artificial lighting.
- Select four or five star efficiency-rated equipment and purchase the smallest size to meet your requirements.
- Ensure fridge/freezer door seals are in good repair.
- Place refrigerators in well ventilated areas; sunlight and hot areas such as windows, ovens and hot boxes increase the cooling load on refrigerators.
- Replace 50W halogen downlights with 20W. This gives a similar lighting effect, using only 40% of the energy.
- Install auto door-closers on walk-in coolers.

By increasing the air-conditioning temperature by 1°C in summer, you could save as much as 10% off your next electricity bill.



## Water – even low water users can save

We've compiled a list of handy water saving tips to help you cut costs and encourage your staff to make the most of your business's water.

### Water saving tips for your shop:

- Purchase water-use appliances/equipment that have a five or six star rating under the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme (WELS).
- Replace single flush toilets with dual flush toilets. Convert existing urinals to waterless or sensor flush control with flow restrictors.
- Install flow regulators to hand wash basins and consider sensor activated taps. Sensor activated taps will eliminate taps left running and also improve patron hygiene.
- Where possible, only use dishwashers and washing machines when they are fully loaded, using the economy cycle.
- Scrape rather than rinse before placing items in the dishwasher.
- Use dry cleaning methods such as sweeping and vacuuming before hosing and mopping to minimise water use.
- Inform cleaning staff of your commitment to water reduction. Ask them about their methods of cleaning, looking for opportunities to reduce their water use, such as turning off taps while cleaning sinks.
- Encourage staff and cleaners to report leaks.
- Don't delay, repair all leaks or drips quickly.

### Save money with flow restrictors!

A flow restrictor on one tap, used for 30 min per day, will save you 66kL/yr or \$87\* per year. If your office has five taps, you could save as much as \$435 per year.

\* Based on a water tariff of \$1.32/kL

### Fix it and save!

A dripping tap can waste up to 31,000 litres each year - more than half the volume of a backyard swimming pool! That's \$40 in water consumption and \$30 in trade waste charges. If it is a hot tap it would cost you an additional \$300. A total of \$370 - more than the cost of replacing a washer!

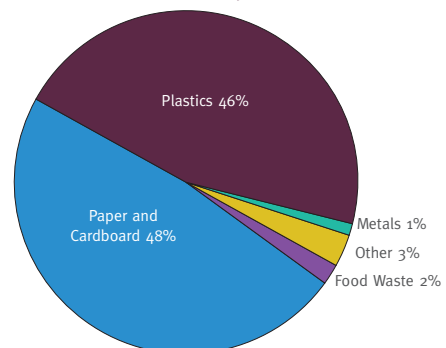


## Waste - reduce, reuse, recycle

### Waste reduction tips:

It is important to recognise that waste prevention is as much about what you buy as what you throw away. Identify the waste items appearing in large quantities, such as cardboard packing boxes, coat hangers and plastic packaging. Look at means to reduce these in your waste by either preventing these items from coming into your shop, or reusing or recycling them.

Retail - Waste Composition\*



\*excl. food retailing

Source products that have a high recycled content. For example, newsagencies and gift shops could source greeting cards produced on recycled paper.

Improved eco-efficiency can strengthen market position, provide competitive advantage and growth.

### **Waste reduction tips for your shop:**

- Working with your suppliers can be a great way to reduce your waste. Suppliers may be able to provide goods in reusable or recyclable packaging or reduce the amount of cardboard, hangers and plastic and paper packaging they use. Polystyrene boxes and milk crates are examples of packaging that can be returned for reuse.
- Consider the amount of packaging you pass on to your customers when selling goods.
- Ask customers if they require a bag rather than providing one, or introduce reusable shopping bags instead of plastic bags.
- Remove and reuse coat hangers from clothes.
- Buy recycled paper and stationery made from recycled goods. Using recycled paper does not mean a reduction in the quality of your final product.
- Print or photocopy on both sides of the page. Think of the environment before you print. Do you really need a hard copy of the document?

### **Product packaging - what a waste!**

Product and distribution packaging make up more than 80% of most businesses' waste stream. Although both types of packaging serve a purpose — protecting the product from damage during delivery and making the product ready for display upon delivery — the cost to manage, recycle, and/or dispose of these by-products can be excessive.

- Ensure printer and copier toner cartridges are refilled or recycled. Refilling your cartridge could save you up to \$100 with every refill and reduces waste production.
- Use glasses, ceramic mugs and metal cutlery rather than disposable cups, cutlery or stirrers in your staff kitchenette.
- Install recycling bins in the staff kitchenette for paper, cardboard, glass, aluminium cans and plastic drink bottle collection, and arrange for collection of these items to be recycled. Where possible, provide recycling facilities for your customers. Provide clear signage on bins to encourage and promote recycling.
- Consider sharing recycling bins with surrounding businesses to both save money and recycle more.
- Inform your cleaning service of the new waste recycling system so that recyclables do not accidentally end up in general waste.

## **Useful references**

For further information on the ecoBiz program:  
[www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecobiz](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecobiz)

### **Energy:**

Energy efficiency: [www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au) and  
[www.energy.qld.gov.au](http://www.energy.qld.gov.au)

Energy consumption of appliances:  
[www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)

### **Waste:**

[www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au)

## **For more information**

- › visit [www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecobiz](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecobiz)
- › email [ecobiz@epa.qld.gov.au](mailto:ecobiz@epa.qld.gov.au)
- › call 1300 369 388

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