



# How Going Green Can Help Your Business

## A Guide for SME Manufacturers

This guide presents actions proven to benefit your company and the environment.

### Why Go Green?

Going green can benefit your company in at least four ways:

- **Cut costs.** Energy efficiency and waste reduction mean savings. Simply replacing regular light bulbs with alternatives can reduce lighting energy costs by 75%.
- **Increase revenues.** Large customers want suppliers to follow environmental standards. And retail customers will pay up to 10% more for products that are green (e.g. organic, fair trade or made from recycled content).
- **Find and keep great employees.** Companies with a better environmental record have more committed, motivated employees.
- **Build community goodwill.** When neighbours view a company positively, permitting is easier. You can build goodwill by telling neighbours about actions that affect them, and by contributing to the community: for example, donating to local causes. Sales increase by \$6 on average for each dollar donated.

### Environmental Actions that Will Help Your Company

- **Quick wins** are easy to accomplish and don't require a lot of expertise or effort.
- **Deep changes** take more effort, but can have greater payoff.

Action Area	Quick Wins	Deep Changes
Lighting	<p><b>Turn off lights</b> when not needed. <b>How:</b> <u>Posters</u> to remind employees (BC Hydro).</p>	<p><b>Use more efficient lights:</b> T8 rather than T12 lamps, T5 instead of HID lighting, and CFLs and LEDs rather than incandescent bulbs. More efficient lights save <u>up to 75%</u> of lighting energy use.</p> <p><b>Incentives and rebates</b> are available. Check with your energy supplier and the <u>energy funding database</u> (Natural Resources Canada).</p>
Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC)	<p><b>Adjust the temperature</b>, manually or with a programmable thermostat. Each degree adjustment reduces your HVAC energy bill by <u>5.4% on average</u>. Calculate exact savings with the <u>small business energy calculator</u> (IESO).</p> <p><b>Maintain HVAC system.</b> Simple maintenance reduces your HVAC energy bill by <u>15-20%</u>. <b>How:</b> <u>Checklist for simple maintenance</u> (US government).</p>	<p><b>Upgrade your HVAC system.</b> Payback is <u>1-6 years</u>, depending on the action (<u>Details</u>). <b>Incentives and rebates</b> are available. Check with your energy supplier and the <u>energy funding database</u> (Natural Resources Canada). You can also involve an <u>energy services company</u> (ESCO), which makes changes at no cost to you.</p>

Action Area	Quick Wins	Deep Changes
Equipment and processes	Maintain equipment like boilers and compressors. Savings can be <u>up to 20%</u> of total plant energy use, with a payback of 4-10 months. <u>Details on specific actions</u> (Bloom Centre and Marbek Consultants).  <u>Incentives and rebates</u> are available (Natural Resources Canada).	Upgrade equipment. Payback is 6 months to 4 years, depending on action ( <u>specifics</u> ). Upgrades also <u>improve employee wellbeing</u> by reducing dust and noise. Look into <u>incentives</u> and assistance from an <u>energy services company (ESCO)</u> .
Transportation	Maintain vehicles properly. Fuel efficiency will increase by <u>up to 5%</u> , saving up to <b>20 cents per gallon</b> . <u>Guidance</u> (US government)  Consolidate delivery routes. "Route optimization" software is available, some for free.	Green your <u>freight transportation</u> (SmartWay, Natural Resources Canada) or your <u>fleet</u> (FleetSmart, Natural Resources Canada). Both programs identify ways to save fuel.
Waste	Recycle. Recycling costs <u>less than \$5</u> a cubic metre, compared to \$6-\$15 to dispose of the same amount of waste.	Reduce and reuse materials. These initiatives increase <u>innovation</u> . Set your priorities based on what kind of waste your company produces.  Waste reduction guides are available from <u>Industry Canada</u> and the <u>US government</u> .
Environmental Management Systems (EMS)	Address EMS elements informally: Set environmental goals, develop a plan to address them, keep track of environmental performance and evaluate results.	Adopt a formal EMS (e.g. ISO 14001) if suppliers demand it or if your operations have environmental risks. Businesses with an EMS see <u>cost savings</u> and <u>increased sales</u> . Payback is <u>1-3 months</u> , but faster for medium than for small enterprises.
Community	Donate to community efforts, especially if they are connected to your business. Sales increase by <u>\$6 on average</u> for each dollar donated.	Tell neighbours about changes that might affect them; for example, different delivery times. Early notice reduces conflict.
Environmental products and services	Meet the environmental standards of large customers (e.g. Walmart) and keep their business.	Offer "green" items to expand your market or get higher prices. Retail customers will pay <u>up to 10% more</u> for products and services that are "green": e.g. energy-efficient, fair trade, or made from recycled content.

## How Other Companies Benefited

A print facility saved more than \$21,000/year through energy-efficient lighting upgrades.

A food processing company with 200 employees installed a boiler economizer to reduce heating energy. The economizer cost \$20,000 to install and will save \$22,400 annually in reduced energy costs; payback is under a year.

A soap manufacturer has reduced waste by an estimated 75% and yielded savings close to \$25,000 a year through pollution prevention. The company reuses all excess plastic removed from bottles after molding when making new bottles, and reuses cleaning water as process water.

A construction equipment company saves \$32,000 per year in waste disposal costs after modifying its paint stripping process. Employees also have a safer and healthier work environment.

A cleaning equipment company designed a new line of floor scrubbers that reduced the use of chemicals. Sales increased by almost 500% in two years, and led to new technologies throughout the industry.

## Your Environmental Strategy

**Get started.** There's not one right place to start. You and your employees know your company best. Try actions that seem like the best fit for your company, see how they're working, and make necessary changes.

**Find Help.** Great resources are available. Use your network: employees, customers and trade associations can all offer insight. Your energy supplier may provide advice and even funding for energy actions. For a comprehensive guide, see Industry Canada's [SME Sustainability Roadmap](#).

**Consider an "audit."** An "[energy audit](#)" or "[waste audit](#)" systematically evaluates your opportunities to save resources and money. You can hire an outside consultant or [do this yourself](#); check with your energy supplier for help.

**Share success.** Publicize what you've done by describing it on your website, in a staff meeting or with customers. Greater awareness enhances the benefits.

## Quick Resources

- Industry Canada's [SME Sustainability Roadmap](#) provides step-by-step guidance to environmental actions.
- [Bloom Centre Case Studies](#) show what other companies have done, and the resulting savings.
- NBS's [SME Primer](#) has tips on environmental and social actions.
- Natural Resources Canada's [Directory of Energy Efficiency Programs](#) shows subsidies offered by municipal, provincial and federal governments.

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