



TIME

Going Green at the Office

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We can compost and conserve all we want at home. But as soon as we hit the office, we turn into triplicate-printing, paper-cup-squashing, run-our-computers-all-night-so-the-boss-thinks-we're-working earth befoilers. One office worker can use a quarter ton of materials in a year--which includes 10,000 pieces of copier paper. Heating, cooling and powering office space are responsible for almost 40% of carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S. and gobble more than 70% of total electricity usage. Commuters spew 1.3 billion tons of CO2 a year. Computers in the office burn \$1 billion worth of electricity annually--and that's when they're not producing a lick of work.

All our unnecessarily generated company waste adds up to unnecessarily wasted company cash. Goosed by the color of money, companies from global empire to mom-and-pop, from high tech to local government are embracing environmentally friendlier architecture, supplies and attitudes. Wal-Mart is placing solar panels on its stores. Los Angeles County may soon offer its 90,000 commuting employees incentives to buy hybrid vehicles; UCLA already does. The San Francisco Federal Building, Dallas' McKinney Green office building, and New York City's Hearst, Bank of America and Goldman Sachs towers were all designed under green principles. Want a tipping point? Here's one: in May, Rupert Murdoch announced that News Corp. would go carbon neutral.

The business case for going green is increasingly clear, even without Al Gore droning on and on and on about it: where green goes, so goes the bottom line. But employers are beginning to realize it's also about the competition for talent. Several recent surveys show that workers, especially from the generation that grew up separating paper from plastic, don't want to work for big fat polluters. One-third of workers would be more inclined to work for a green company, says staffing firm Adecco USA, and more than half wish their employers would be more environmentally friendly...

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