

**Vienna Business Association
Tips for Greening Your Business**

The Vienna Business Association’s Green Committee is pleased to share the following tips to help you make your business more environmentally sound; promote your own good health and that of your employees and customers; and in many cases, save money. Most of the recommended actions cost little or nothing to implement, and we have consciously attempted to collect and present steps that are proven to work and generate “win-win” outcomes.

We present the greening tips in tabular form on the pages that follow. They are organized by area/topic, and address waste, energy use, water use, transportation, health, and purchasing. Within each of these areas, the recommended actions are presented with the easiest to implement at the top and the more complex or time-consuming ones toward the bottom. In this way, you can begin with some actions that are easy and (generally) free to get started and make some quick progress, and then work your way down to more involved steps (many of which offer very attractive returns on investment) when you are ready.

For each recommended action, we very briefly describe what is involved, its benefits relative to other alternatives, and for most, a source of further information.

There are many ways in which business owners can seek to “green” their enterprises, and no shortage of guidance and opinions about what to do and why. In assembling this list, the Green Committee has expressly sought to offer only a limited set of actions that can be easily understood and implemented, require little in the way of time and money, offer one or more clear environmental and/or human health benefits, and are supported by common sense and (generally) the successful ongoing experience of established government/industry programs. The following example illustrates this thinking.

**The Right Way and the Wrong Way to Green Your Business
In Vienna, VA**

	Right Way	Wrong Way
Example Action	Replace Halogen and Fluorescent Lighting with LED	Install Rain Barrel and Piping to Capture Roof Runoff to Water Landscaping
Cost	\$50-3,000	\$250-500
Impact	Lower electricity use and cost, better light quality, reduced maintenance cost, no heavy metals	Lower water use and cost
Significance	Moderate	Negligible
Simple Payback Period	6-30 months	Infinite!
Return on Investment	>20 %	~Zero

With that said, we emphasize that there is no one greening strategy that is right for every business. Some of the tips we offer will likely make a lot of sense in the context of your business and others may not. As with any other aspect of your business, you will have to be the judge as to what steps will work and add the most value.

For those who may be motivated to do more, we encourage you to consider taking the *Vienna Sustainability Challenge* sponsored by the Town of Vienna’s Community Enhancement Commission (CEC). This recognition program offers points for additional greening steps taken by local businesses and nonprofits and provides awards to those that reach a defined threshold on an annual basis. Further information can be found here: <https://www.viennava.gov/index.aspx?NID=1248>.

We thank you for your support, and wish you success in your greening efforts!

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Area	Action	Benefit(s)				Notes	For Further Info
		Easy	Free or Cheap	Impactful	Good ROI		
Waste	Reuse office supplies (e.g., folders, envelopes)	✓	✓			Reduce waste and save money	
	Set printers and copiers to print double-sided as the default	✓	✓	✓		Save paper and filing space	• https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2013-09/documents/fec_automatic_duplexing.pdf
	Use and transmit documents electronically where appropriate	✓	✓			Save paper, toner, power, and time!	• https://www.staples.com/sbd/cre/tech-services/explore-tips-and-advice/tech-articles/the-pros-and-cons-of-digital-vs-printed-documents.html
	Eliminate single use containers (e.g., coffee cups, bottled water)		✓			Good way to reduce trash	
	Collect discarded paper, cardboard, metal cans, and plastics in a separate container and recycle them	✓	✓			Talk with your landlord if you are in rented space and don't have recycling collection	• https://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-basics
	Ensure used electronics are recycled		✓	✓		These contain toxic heavy metals and should be kept out of the waste stream	• http://www.electronicstakeback.com/how-to-recycle-electronics/ • https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling-trash/electronics
Energy	Set back thermostat 1° (cooler in winter, warmer in summer)	✓	✓	✓		Save about 1 percent of energy used for each degree	• https://www.directenergy.com/blog/how-much-can-you-save-by-adjusting-your-thermostat/
	Set water heater temperature at 120° F or lower	✓	✓	✓		Can save hundreds of dollars/year	• https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/services/do-it-yourself-energy-savings-projects/savings-project-lower-water-heating
	Enable “sleep” and “inactive” modes and other energy saving settings	✓	✓	✓		Save up to \$50 per computer annually	• https://www.energystar.gov/products/low_carbon_it_campaign/put_your_computers_sleep
	Ensure all air vents are unobstructed by office materials or equipment	✓	✓			Improve HVAC efficiency and comfort	• https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/tenants/occupy_space_efficiently
	Put office equipment on power strips/surge suppressors and turn them off when not in use	✓		✓	✓	“Smart” power strips are now available that will control multiple devices	• https://www.energystar.gov/products/low_carbon_it_campaign/more_it_energy_saving_tips
	Clean/replace HVAC filters regularly	✓		✓	✓	Get better performance and less wear and tear on your HVAC equipment	• https://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=heat_cool.pr_maintenance
	Replace incandescent and CFL bulbs with LEDs	✓		✓	✓	Very quick payback with today's fixtures and lamps!	• https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/lighting-choices-save-you-money

Area	Action	Benefit(s)				Notes	For Further Info
		Easy	Free or Cheap	Impactful	Good ROI		
	Install and set a programmable thermostat	✓		✓	✓	Save about \$180 every year	• https://www.energystar.gov/products/heating_cooling/programmable_thermostats
Water	Promptly repair/replace leaking or dripping fixtures			✓	✓	Leaking faucets and running toilets can waste 100 gallons of water/day or more	• https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week
Transportation	Remove car roof racks unless/until in use	✓	✓	✓		Save 1-2 miles/gallon	• https://newscenter.lbl.gov/2016/04/25/roof-racks-drag-fuel-economy/
	Check and adjust tire pressure of vehicle(s) regularly	✓	✓	✓		Save fuel and reduce uneven tire wear	• https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/maintain.jsp
	Allow telework by employees one day/week where feasible	✓	✓	✓		Get more out of your work hours and reduce costs and air pollution	• https://www.afdc.energy.gov/conservation/telework.html
	Use on-line video conferencing rather than traveling off-site to meetings where feasible	✓		✓	✓	Improve productivity, save money and time, and reduce air pollution	• https://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-teleconferencing-43216.html
Health	Open windows rather than using air conditioning or heating when possible	✓	✓	✓		Indoor air is usually less healthy to breathe than outdoor air	• https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/improving-indoor-air-quality
	Eliminate antibacterial soaps	✓	✓	✓		These soaps provide little benefit and may promote antibiotic resistance in bacteria	• https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm378393.htm
	Limit pesticide use; employ integrated pest management where needed	✓	✓	✓		Reduce chemical exposure	• https://www.epa.gov/managing-pests-schools/introduction-integrated-pest-management
Purchasing	Source purchases from local vendors where feasible	✓	✓	✓		Help support local businesses and communities, and reduce pollutant emissions from transportation	
	Select products with appropriate attributes and/or certifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EnergyStar® computers, office equipment, appliances, and lighting • EPEAT IT equipment • WaterSense® plumbing fixtures • Green Seal® cleaning products, paints, paper products • FSC®, SFI®, and/or PEFC® certified and/or recycled-content printing and writing paper 	✓		✓	✓	There are well-established, credible programs to help you find products that are environmentally sound. These are a few examples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.energystar.gov/products • https://greenelectronicscouncil.org/epeat/epeat-overview/ • https://www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-products • http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsAndServices.aspx • http://www.sfiprogram.org/ • https://us.fsc.org/en-us • https://www.pefc.org/

For further information or to offer any suggestions, please contact VBA at info@viennabusiness.org.