

# Change Choices Good, Better, Best

## Paper use in our workplace



## Stepping Up to Sustainability



## Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' will practice sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!

### Did you know?

Recycling one stack of newspapers about six feet tall is equivalent to one living tree, standing 35 feet tall!

### Did you know?

By recycling one ton of paper, we save 17 trees, over 26 000 litres of water, nearly 2 000 litres of oil, about 260kg of air pollution, 2½m<sup>2</sup> of landfill space and 4,077 Kilowatt hours of energy.

### Did you know?

Rainforests are being cut down at the rate of 100 acres per minute.

### Did you know?

Ink cartridges, which are made of high-grade polymers or plastic, can take up to 1 000 years to decompose!



## Paper

*How do we know if our paper comes from forests that are sustainably managed?*

The non-profit Forest Stewardship Council has established an international certification programme, based on standards developed from the input of many interested parties such as forest managers and owners, consumers, environmental groups, scientists, indigenous peoples, and union representatives. The certification process studies forests and tracks each step in the supply path from the forest, through pulp and paper manufacturing to distribution and sales. In this way, it is possible to be reasonably certain that a given product contains fibre that comes only from sustainably managed forests. FSC paper carries their logo on its packaging.

It is also important to look for other logos and information which assure that a product is environmentally preferable.



Source: [www.secret-life.org/paper/paper\\_environment.php#Q1](http://www.secret-life.org/paper/paper_environment.php#Q1)

## Good Change Choices



**Print your documents in 'draft' mode.** Changing your print setting to 'draft' can speed up printing and save ink.

**Print or photocopy on both sides of the page.** Printing on both sides of the paper will save 50% of paper usage.

**Use a smaller font size.** Using smaller fonts (changing fonts from 12 to 10) will reduce the amount of paper used in the office. Using single line spacing instead of 1.5 or double line spacing will also reduce paper usage.

**Reuse scrap paper where possible.** Use scrap paper for low priority printing and notes.

**Make more use of flash drives, memory keys and USB sticks.** Use USB devices for all person-to-person information sharing and transfers instead of paper. The data from the giver can be loaded onto the USB and downloaded onto the receiver's computer.

## Better Change Choices



**Send information or letters by e-mail wherever possible.** Printer and copier cartridges can be harmful to you and the environment. Different printer inks can release deadly fumes, while cartridges are non-biodegradable, adding to landfill sites and garbage so the less you use them, the better.

**Consider how you advertise.** Place adverts on the Internet and in newspapers instead of printing your own posters or fliers. This will save on both ink and paper.

**Create systems that allow staff to measure how many print copies they are personally responsible for each month.** Most people are shocked to find out their individual cumulative number of copies. This knowledge may motivate people to reduce their personal paper footprint.

**Use your fax machine effectively.** Send a fax or word document without printing first! Simply use the menus in Word. Help on this should be available from your IT department.

## Best Change Choices



**Buy and use environmentally friendly copy paper.** It takes 60% less energy to manufacture paper from recycled stock than from virgin materials. Producing a ton of virgin paper requires 20 trees and over 26 000 more litres of water than a ton of 100% recycled paper. And, chlorine is used in the bleaching process, releasing many toxins.

**Paper recycling.** Place bins around the office where unused and other paper can be placed. This paper can be taken to your local recycling depot for further processing.



**WESSA Share-Net**  
People  
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For  
Environmental Education

For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 2124 or 2144; e-mail us at [sharenet@wessa.co.za](mailto:sharenet@wessa.co.za) or visit our website [www.wessa.org.za](http://www.wessa.org.za)

Main funding agent of the WESSA 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' project.

### Did you know?

Global paper consumption increased by twenty times in the past century, and has more than tripled over the past 30 years.

### Did you know?

Many companies use recycled paper to manufacture toilet paper. Recycled toilet paper is often cheaper than ordinary toilet paper.

### Did you know?

Recycling half the world's paper would free 20 million acres of forest land.

### Did you know?

Between 20-30% of all printer cartridges are currently recycled.

Practice the  
lifestyle choices  
we all have to make!!