



## Office Paper Reduction: Quick Tips

Below are quick tips for using less paper and saving money for your office. Why not try a few of these ideas and see how fast the savings add up for you?

### Policy Considerations

- **Adopt a "Double-Sided" Policy.** Consider adopting an organizational policy that will ensure all individual documents are printed on both sides of the page.
- **Minor Hand Written Corrections are OK.** Consider adopting an in-house policy allowing internal documents to be submitted with minor legible handwritten corrections. This means it is okay to make neat handwritten corrections to fix typos and punctuation errors, add a word or delete one, on documents you give to your managers, so long as the document is for internal use. You can save time and paper by making a simple hand correction and by having several people review the same draft, rather than reprinting each successive draft.

### Printing Improvements

- **Set Computer Defaults to Print Double-Sided.** Set up computer software for default two-sided printing including word processing, spreadsheets, electronic mail, and others.
- **Preview Documents Before Printing.** Proofread documents on screen before printing. Don't forget to use the speller/grammar function to detect errors.
- **Print Only the Pages You Need.** You just got back that 20-page report you wrote and there are changes to make on pages 2, 3, 4, 7, and 15. After making the changes, do you print out the whole document? If yes, consider instead printing only the pages you need. Most software programs provide this option under the print function. Consult your information management staff or your software guidebook if you are unsure of how to print selected document pages.
- **Print Envelopes Without Labels.** Save the cost of buying mailing labels and eliminate the waste associated with those labels by printing addresses directly on envelopes. Most printers can easily print directly on a variety of envelopes. Educate employees on this printer function and keep instructions posted. Printing addresses directly on envelopes also maintains the recyclability of those envelopes, unlike "sticky" labels, which are a paper recycling contaminant.

### Copying Tips

- **Practice Preventive Copier Maintenance.** Keep copiers and printers in good repair and make it policy to only buy copiers and printers that make reliable double-sided copies. Let your copier maintenance person know when a copier is performing poorly (toner is low, jams frequently, etc.). Regular copier maintenance is important, especially if the toner is low. Many times copiers are used until all the toner is gone and that wears down machines. A copier that works well is less likely to jam and this helps save paper!
- **Fill Copier Trays Correctly.** Yes, there is a right way to put paper into the copier. Before filling a copier paper tray, check the label on one end of the paper ream package. Look for an arrow pointing up and the words "copy this side first." Put the paper in the copier so that this side is facing up. This

will reduce jams. Note that when a paper ream does not have a label with arrows, you can perform a simple test to see which way the paper should be inserted. Hold the stack of paper at each end and note how it flops down. Turn the paper over and note again how it flops down. The side that has the greatest flop, or curve, faces upward in the paper tray.

- **Route Memos and Newsletters.** Instead of making a copy for each person, route one copy around the office. Ask originators to send fewer copies to your office.

## Creating Documents

- **Format Standard Forms for Paper Reduction.** Reduce and double-side standard forms. When possible, automate standard forms as templates. Electronic forms are easier to use and eliminate the need for blank hard copy forms.
- **Shorten Documents.** It costs about 5 cents to make an impression from your office photocopier. When you mail a document, it costs about 3.5 cents each page for first class mail. Paper costs about .6 cents per page. Shorter documents save money! Make your writing as clear and concise as possible. Have someone else edit it. You can use smaller fonts or margins, but be careful not to compromise readability.
- **Use Revision Features in Word Processing Software.** Take advantage of onscreen editing features when making changes to draft documents, then send the new draft electronically.

## Reuse

- **Provide Trays to Collect and Reuse One-Sided Paper.** Encourage employees to save and reuse paper printed on only one side at their desks. Collect paper that has been printed on one side for reuse in copiers and fax machines. Also, use the one-sided paper to make scratch pads. Making ¼-, ½-, or full-size scratch pads is simple and easy—just put single-sided paper face up and secure with a paper clip or binder clip at the top!
- **Provide Trays to Collect and Reuse Envelopes and File Folders.** Encourage reuse of large envelopes and file folders by providing centrally located trays for their collection. Your office can buy mailing labels with the your return address and logo to place over old addresses on envelopes to facilitate their reuse. Always encourage employees to first reuse items such as large envelopes and file folders at their desk.

## Reduce

- **Send Information Electronically.** Use e-mail for forms, document transmittals and faxes. Think carefully before printing electronic information. Organize and save it so it is easy to look up. This way you won't need to make hard copy files of important information. Do make backups on floppy disks regularly!
- **Reduce Unwanted Mail.** Contact mail senders to take your company's name off their mailing list or mark unwanted first class mail "Refused, Return to Sender."
- **Eliminate Excess Mailings.** Trim mailing lists used to send information to your customers. Give customers opportunities to indicate if and how often they want to receive information. Your customers will appreciate your efforts to minimize unwanted or duplicated mailings.

## *Educate Employees on the Benefits of Paper Reduction*

- **Let employees know** that their paper reduction efforts not only save paper, but also postage costs (from reduced mail volume), and storage space requirements. All these savings add to a leaner, more efficient office that benefits everyone.
- **Promote a "Think Before You Copy" Attitude.** Workers should be encouraged to make sure they really need the copies they are making and not to make excess copies.
- **Post Paper Reduction Reminders by Printers and Copiers.** Remind people to copy double-sided by posting reminders near the copiers, using interesting posters or entertaining slogans ("2 sides are better than one," "make a 2 (copies) for 1 (page) offer," "get a second impression," etc.) and change them often to maintain interest.
- **Consider Formalizing your Efforts in a Paper Reduction Campaign.** Make the campaign complete with slogans and a kick-off event. Include representatives from management and all levels of staff, decide priorities, develop measurable goals, and a timeline for implementation.

### *Want More Info?*

- Visit **Urban Impact** on the web at [www.urbanimpact.com](http://www.urbanimpact.com) or call **604.273.0089**.
- Or visit the **Recycling Council of BC** [www.rcbc.bc.ca](http://www.rcbc.bc.ca) (732-9352) **REC-YCLE**.