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Effective Waste Management for creating a clean and healthy environment

Overview

Waste management is a crucial part of corporate functions, as it not only helps achieve cost savings, but also reduces an organisation's impact upon the environment. The amount and type of waste produced depends largely on the type of business, for example, manufacturing businesses tend to produce more waste than those in service industries.

We at Liberty Videocon General Insurance value the importance of having an adequate waste management system at your office or facility; and intend to suggest some useful measures for understanding and undertaking effective steps towards creating a clean and healthy environment. We sincerely hope that the measures suggested in this document will help follow better practices when it comes to implementing a proper 'waste management' system.



Source: <http://london-property-network.com/wp-content/themes/directorypress/thumbs/Waste-Management.jpg>

What is Waste?

Waste is anything your business intends to discard or produces that are not wanted or required.

Producing excessive amounts of waste is often a sign that your business processes may be inefficient. It is in your interest to identify ways of reducing the amount of waste your business generates.

Choosing a Waste Management Option

You need to choose the best waste management options for dealing with each type of waste your business produces.

The waste hierarchy can help you to choose the least environmentally damaging option:

- **Reduce:** The most cost-effective option is to cut the amount of waste you produce in the first place.
- **Reuse:** Products and materials can be reused by your own business or another organisation.
- **Recycle and Compost:** These options ensure that benefit is still gained from goods and materials that have reached the end of their useful life.
- **Recover Energy:** Some facilities use waste to generate energy or produce biofuel. Consider on recovering energy and producing fuel from waste.
- **Dispose:** The least sustainable option is to bury waste at landfill sites or burn it without recovering energy, as these do not lead to any benefit from the waste.

What makes this possible?

Your business can benefit from waste management training covering the following topics:

- Handling hazardous waste (following health and safety guidelines, keeping dangerous waste secure)
- Collecting waste (storing it safely, sorting it for recycling)

Reduce Waste in Production

Waste arising in production processes can have a significant effect on profitability. The challenge is to reduce this waste without undermining the effectiveness of the process of production.

Few common things you can do to improve the efficiency of production processes and reduce waste include:

- Reuse rinse water in cooling systems
- Check regularly that equipment is correctly calibrated
- Reduce unnecessary stoppages in a production line
- Upgrade or replace old equipment
- Minimise spills or leaks
- Use sealed systems

Purchasing

- Establish purchasing guidelines to encourage waste prevention (durable, concentrated, reusable, high quality).
- Centralise purchasing to eliminate unnecessary purchases and ensure that waste reduction purchasing policies are followed.
- Consider length of warranty and availability of repair services when purchasing equipment. (contract for maintenance to extend the life of products).
- Substitute less toxic materials with toxic materials (e.g., vegetable-based inks, water-based glue, markers and paints).
- Use plastic trash can liners made of recycled HDPE, instead of ones made with LDPE or LLDPE. They contain fewer raw materials, work equally well for most uses, and generally cost less.
- Order merchandise with minimal packaging or layers of packaging, but keeping safety in mind. Contact manufacturers directly and express purchase preferences.

Packaging

- Eliminate unnecessary packaging or layers of packaging.
- Encourage suppliers to use reusable totes or boxes, rather than sending you disposable boxes that you have to break down and recycle.
- Return, reuse and repair wooden pallets and spools and use a clamp system instead of new pallets for outgoing shipments.

- Set up a system for returning cardboard boxes and foam peanuts to distributors for reuse.

Building a Waste Management Strategy

- Understand the legal implications of the waste produced in your organisation by identifying the specific legislation that affects you.
- Look at your general environmental issues - what role does waste play in these?
- Quantify and identify your waste. Where does it arise and how much does it cost?
- Undertake a walk around audit and look at your bills. Using the waste hierarchy, identify what currently happens to the waste as it arises.
- Identify a waste management champion or team to drive things forward.
- Produce an action plan for reducing your wastes.
- Get commitment from senior management for the action plan.
- Identify the possible disposal options where you cannot reduce or recycle.
- Select your waste carriers carefully and make sure your duty of care responsibilities are met.
- Monitor and review your achievements.
- Communicate your successes to your staff, senior managers and outside your organisation to interested stakeholders.

Waste Management - A fact file

Recycling By the Numbers



5,44,000

Trees saved if every household in the United States replaced just one roll of virgin fiber paper towels (70 sheets) with 100% recycled ones.



315 kg

Amount of CO2 not released into the atmosphere each time a metric ton of glass is used to create new glass products.



\$160 billion

Value of the global recycling industry that employs over 1.5 million people.



79 million tons

Amount of waste material diverted away from disposal in 2006 through recycling and composting.



20 million

Tons of electronic waste thrown away each year. One ton of scrap from discarded computer contains more gold than can be produced from 17 tons of gold ore.



98%

Percentage of glass bottles in Denmark that are refillable.

98%

Of those are returned by consumers for reuse.



9 cubic yards

Amount of landfill space saved by recycling one ton of cardboard.



51.5%

Percentage of the paper consumed in that was recovered for recycling in 2005.



5%

Fraction of the energy it takes to recycle aluminum versus mining & refining new aluminum.

Top 5 Recycling Countries

Switzerland 52%



Austria 49.7%



Netherlands 46%



Germany 48%



Norway 40%



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