



Recycling and
Environmental
Action
Planning
Society

Greening Your Office

Tips by Email

Attention: **Office Staff**

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GREEN TIP #27:

Green Sleeves

You might be amazed how sharp work clothes from thrift stores can look. If you buy new, get clothes made with organic or recycled fibers. Avoid clothes that need to be dry cleaned, and if they so demand it, seek out your local "green" dry cleaner. Tips on greening those work duds:

1. **Shop with a plan** - Abandoning the impulse buy may sound boring, but how exciting is a closet full of stuff that doesn't work? In the long run, knowing what you're looking for before you shop will save time and eliminate clutter.
2. **Love your duds** - Whatever you've chosen, take good care of it.
3. **Don't go dry** - See if there is a local green cleaner employing "wet cleaning" or liquid CO2 techniques. Many articles whose tags ask for the dry clean treatment can actually be hand washed, especially silk, wool and linen.
4. **Buy vintage or used** - People unload clothes for all types of reasons, and you know that adage about trash and treasure. You'll be giving a cast-off garment a second life, and possibly supporting charitable work in the process.
5. **Wash well** - It requires lots of water and energy, so only do it when you absolutely need to and have a full laundry load. Turn articles inside out and use the lowest temp possible. Choose phosphate-free and biodegradable detergents and line dry as much as possible. Treat stains quickly with nontoxic removers.
6. **Wear organic** - It takes a third of a pound of chemical fertilizers and pesticides to produce the cotton for one T-shirt! That Luckily, organic cotton is becoming easier and easier to find.
7. **Approach new fabrics with skeptical enthusiasm** - No doubt you've heard the hype around bamboo, soy, or even corn fabric. Bamboo, for instance, sounds great: it's a fast-growing plant, not reliant on chemicals, and beautifully drapes the human form. Trouble is, bamboo plantations can displace native forests, and the harvesting and fiber processing are often polluting and unregulated. As with soy, corn, and Tencel (which comes from trees), the processing from plant to fabric is energy and resource intensive.
8. **Don't throw it all away** - Finally, a stain, a tear, or changing fashion threaten to separate you from your favorite dress shirt. Don't just abandon your old friend to the waste-stream! If the condition is perfectly good, you can always donate or [Freecycle](#) it.



Any Questions or Suggestions? Call or Email us! 250 561 7327 or green_solutions@reaps.org

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