



Recycling and
Environmental
Action
Planning
Society

Greening Your Office

Tips by Email

Attention: **Office Staff**

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GREEN TIP #4:

Go for REAL towels!

In the washrooms, in the lunchroom, chances are, your office uses some paper towel

- 40% of U.S. landfill trash is paper products.
- If every household in the U.S. used just one less 70-sheet roll of virgin fiber paper towels, it would save 544,000 trees each year. Change that to using three less rolls per U.S. household per year, and that would save 120,000 tons of waste and \$4.1 million in landfill dumping fees.
- Typical paper towel is manufactured using chlorine, which releases carcinogenic dioxins and furans.
- The paper industry is the third largest contributor to global warming.



Though these stats are from the US, in Canada our seemingly endless forests might make us even more wasteful when it comes to paper, particularly the convenience of paper towel.

So, what can you office do?

Use recycled paper towels — If you must go the paper towel route, reach for the ones with recycled content. Many paper towels that are said to contain recycled content only come from mill scraps, so go for the ones that are both "[post-consumer](#)" (the higher the percentage the better) and [recycled](#).

Compost them — As long as your paper towels are unbleached and chlorine-free, they are safe to toss into your compost bin, not the trash.

BUT THE BEST OPTION OF THEM ALL...

Towel dry — Using cloth towels saves more energy and creates less greenhouse gases compared to paper towels. They also last much longer and don't get sent off to the landfill after a single use.

Source: <http://1800recycling.com/2009/10/going-paper-towel-less/>

Where to start:

1. **Support one of our local charities' thrift stores and buy a large stack of hand towels and tea towels.**
2. **Set up a washing schedule to circulate the responsibility between office employees**
3. **Install a hand towel rack or get a stand alone rack for towels**
4. **Feel great about saving trees, energy, and reducing waste!**

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

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