

**Becoming a more environmentally- friendly business** is a choice that can reap big rewards. Green Business practices can help save money, attract customers, enhance your reputation and help make a business more efficient. A company policy of environmental stewardship or mission that includes sustainable practices will help create the vision. There are three main areas where a business can become more green and sustainable:

- Improve energy efficiency and water conservation
- Changes in work practices
- Recycling and waste reduction

### Improve Energy Efficiency and Water conservation

There are simple ways to reduce energy and water use and save money at the same time. An energy [audit can be done by Progress Energy](#) to review where there may be easy impacts to reduce energy use, as well as long-term investments for the future.

Implement staff guidelines for turning off computers, peripherals, as well as office and meeting room lights. Water conservation in outdoor landscapes can save thousands of gallons of water each year (see [Florida Yards and Neighborhoods](#) ).

### Changes in Work Practices

To become a green business, employees need to be a part of the practice changes that will make it successful. Creating a green committee that promotes these new practices will be a good start, as well as educational programs for staff. Discussing [green purchasing practices](#), energy conservation, double- sided copying, [green meetings](#) , reduction of paper use through electronic sharing, telecommuting and other [innovative sustainable practices](#) will help the team get started. Start small and build on these practice changes gradually until they become habits. Develop a



Green Business practices can help save money, attract customers, enhance your reputation and help make a business more efficient.

staff pledge program and rewards around the new practices (take the [Check Your Green Commitment At Work Pledge](#) to get started) .

### Recycling and Waste Reduction

Reducing waste in an office can make a positive impact on the bottom line as well as reduce your carbon footprint. Get a waste assessment to determine strategies and options from [Pinellas County Utilities Solid Waste](#).

### Develop an Action Plan

1. Evaluate environmental programs that fit well with your vision and mission.
2. Communicate your environmental initiatives to customers and staff.
3. Report successes and get feedback.

Resources:

[Ten Steps to Green Business Practices](#)

**Mary Campbell, Urban Sustainability Agent**

Pinellas County Extension

12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL 33774

727-582-2100

[www.pinellascountyextension.org](#)