

Environmental Responsibility Expectations for City of Durham Employees  
Adopted May 2009

I. PURPOSE

To recognize the goals set forth in the City of Durham Solid Waste Management Plan and the Durham Local Action Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions and for Durham to be a responsible environmental leader.

II. EXPECTATIONS

All City employees shall take every reasonable effort to reduce the amount and toxicity of solid waste they generate, recycle materials recoverable from their operations, and maximize the procurement of recycled, energy efficient, and non-toxic products. Department directors shall monitor compliance with these *Expectations*.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. Environmentally Responsible - products or product usage procedures which are acknowledged to have minimal impact on the environment. Such products or procedures should reduce environmental impact through their composition and/or recyclability or by reduction in quantity and toxicity of waste products, energy use or water consumption.
2. Waste Reduction - The act of avoiding, eliminating and reducing the amount of solid waste at the source of generation, at the point of usage and at the time of its discard.
3. Non-Toxic Product(s) - Any item which is not considered hazardous waste and that does not otherwise pose a threat to short or long-term human health during its use.
4. Energy-Efficient Product(s) - Products that meet the US Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star qualifications or US Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) and vehicles that meet the US Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay qualifications.

IV. WASTE REDUCTION

1. Reduce  
All City employees shall reduce waste at the source.
  - a) During City functions, all efforts shall be made to use reusable tableware and compostable or recyclable products such as plates, bowls, napkins, forks, cups and containers. All efforts will be made to avoid foam products.

- b) Employees are encouraged to use e-mail where available to avoid using paper, and to resist printing emails unnecessarily.
- c) All City departments shall require two-sided printing and copying on all documents whenever feasible. Employees are encouraged to format documents in a manner that will reduce the number of pages printed. New printers shall have duplex copying capabilities when feasible. Technology Solutions is responsible for setting duplexing as the default for each workstation for all capable printers. This includes printing from network connected or stand-alone personal computer printers that are capable of duplexing.
- d) All employees shall strive to reduce the amount of paper that they use by avoiding unnecessary printing or photocopying.
- e) Memos and policies, when they cannot be circulated by e-mail, shall be circulated with an employee routing slip rather than being photocopied for every employee.
- f) A central file for paper/hard copies shall be developed within all departments to eliminate multiple, duplicative files.
- g) Departments will take advantage of electronic document storage when possible to reduce the amount of paper copies retained.
- h) To the greatest extent possible, departments should phase out personal printers in favor of digital multi-purpose machines, while maintaining adequate privacy and backup capability.

## 2. Reuse

City employees shall reuse products and materials to the greatest extent possible.

- a) Packaging materials such as Styrofoam peanuts and bubble wrap shall either be stored in a central area for reuse or recycled at local mail packaging stores.
- b) Employees shall use reusable interoffice envelopes to transmit mail in lieu of non-reusable envelopes, whenever feasible.
- c) Employees shall save reusable paper and outdated stationary (letterhead) and use the blank side for scratch paper or for printing rough drafts, whenever possible, or turned into the print shop to be made into scrap paper tablets. Scrap paper tablets shall be provided to all departments by the print shop upon request.
- d) Employees shall reuse manila folders, brown envelopes and other types of paper where applicable.

## 3. Recycle

All City employees shall recycle materials to the greatest extent possible.

- a) Employees shall participate in the City's internal office paper, recyclable container, newspaper and cardboard recycling program. Trash cans containing target recyclables as defined in Durham Ordinance Section 58-1 (corrugated cardboard, aluminum cans, steel cans, newspapers, glass bottles and jars) will not be emptied by janitorial staff
- b) Employees shall follow the Department of Solid Waste Management recycling guidelines to avoid contaminating recycling containers with trash or improper materials. [www.durhamnc.gov/departments/solid/pdf/recycling\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.durhamnc.gov/departments/solid/pdf/recycling_brochure.pdf)
- c) Departments are responsible for recycling their laser/toner cartridges.
- d) Event coordinators shall provide well-labeled recycling containers for beverage cans, bottles, and other recyclables at all functions and events held by city employees in city facilities. The coordinator(s) can borrow recycling containers from the City recycling program (containers are located throughout City of Durham facilities) provided that the containers are returned uncontaminated (with no non-recyclables inside) after the event. If additional containers are needed, the Solid Waste Department or Keep Durham Beautiful shall provide assistance.
- e) All refuse and recycling containers shall be properly labeled for ease of use.

4. Disposal of chemicals and other hazardous materials

City employees shall minimize the impact of chemicals and other hazardous materials through judicious use and disposal.

- a) All City departments shall review their operations to determine what procedures may be modified to minimize and/or eliminate the unnecessary use of any chemical products that are not deemed to be Environmentally Responsible.
- b) Employees shall use chemical products completely before disposal, when feasible.
- c) All Departments shall regularly review their waste products to determine if they are properly acquiring, using and disposing of materials.
- d) An effort shall be made to reuse or recycle unused products whenever possible.
- e) All waste materials that cannot be reused or recycled shall be disposed of in an Environmentally Responsible manner. In particular, hazardous waste products such as oil based paint, solvents, batteries, bleaches, and other hazardous cleaning products shall be disposed of properly. Departments may arrange and pay for disposal with the Household Hazardous Waste contractor or another hazardous waste contractor. [www.durhamnc.gov/departments/solid/wr\\_hazardous.cfm](http://www.durhamnc.gov/departments/solid/wr_hazardous.cfm). The State of North Carolina has a contract available for fluorescent light bulbs and electronic waste recycling. When using state contracts, it is not necessary to go out

for bid.

## V. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

1. Facility managers will make the necessary arrangements to achieve optimum efficiency in the use of electricity, natural gas, and any other energy resource to meet the heating, cooling, and electricity needs of the facility.
2. Energy Star and power-saving features for copiers, computers, monitors, printers, and other office equipment shall be enabled during the initial installation and shall remain enabled unless these features conflict with the manufacturer's recommended operation and maintenance of the equipment.
3. Employees shall turn off lights, computers, coffee pots, and other electronic equipment in unused offices, conference rooms, and other spaces, whenever possible.
4. Employees shall turn off computers when they leave for the weekend. Printers, monitors, speakers, and other computer peripherals shall be turned off when the employee leaves for the day.
5. Portable electric heaters are not to be used in City facilities unless specifically required by occupants because of medical conditions or during failure of the building heating, ventilation or air conditioning systems. The City Energy Manager will grant such exemptions on a case-by-case basis.

## VI. TRAINING

1. All new employees will be made aware of these *Expectations* and the reasoning behind it during New Employee Training.
2. The Waste Reduction staff will assist each department with these *Expectations* by conducting educational waste audits and making positive recommendations that would bring them in compliance with the spirit and intent of the *Expectations*.