

## Green Routine



# Veterans Affairs Central Office Greening Action Guide & Toolkit

VA Green Routine



September 2009



*Greening VACO requires a collaborative effort;  
we thank you in advance for your participation!*

## Welcome

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as an agency is making great strides towards operating more energy efficient facilities, using more renewable energy, “greening” its vehicle fleets with alternative fuel vehicles, and achieving other milestones on the path to environmental sustainability. In addition to agency activities, each and every one of us has daily opportunities to contribute to a healthier indoor and outdoor environment. The many actions we as individuals can take to reduce, reuse, and recycle can also generate cost savings that VA can rededicate to caring for Veterans and their families. Please take advantage of the information and resources provided in this document.

## Purpose of the Greening Action Guide and Toolkit

The Greening VACO Working Group and its Subcommittees have developed resources such as this Greening Action Guide and Toolkit to help VACO executives, managers, and employees plan and implement actions that can improve VACO's overall energy efficiency, conserve resources, and demonstrate environmental stewardship.

- Executives and managers, with help from staff, may use the **Greening Action Guide** as a resource in greening their organizations.
- Staff, managers, and executives can use the more specific recommendations in the **Toolkit** to help implement the **Greening Action Guide**.

## Additional Resources for Going Green

<b>VA Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM)</b>	<a href="http://www.va.gov/oaem/">http://www.va.gov/oaem/</a>
<b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</b>	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/greeningepa/">http://www.epa.gov/greeningepa/</a>
<b>National Center for Environmental Health (CDC)</b>	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/">http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/</a>
<b>United States Department of Justice (DOJ) – Green Your Office</b>	<a href="http://www.usdoj.gov/jmd/ep/green-your-office.htm">http://www.usdoj.gov/jmd/ep/green-your-office.htm</a>
<b>FedCenter – Sustainability</b>	<a href="http://www.fedcenter.gov/programs/sustainability/">http://www.fedcenter.gov/programs/sustainability/</a>

Office Action Guide Example

Strategy	Action #	Action	Lead	Tasks	Due Date	Status
2.2	2.2.1	Mandate all printers default to duplex (double-sided) printing if available				

Potential Anticipated Results:

- Reduced waste
- Cost savings in decreased purchasing of paper

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## Greening Action Guide

This Greening Action Guide was developed as guidance for VA executives and managers as they implement sustainable practices with help from their staff. The goal is to develop an environmentally aware and responsible culture that conserves resources. The Greening Action Guide specifies a lead office to handle particular actions. Unless otherwise noted in the “lead” column all offices can implement these actions.

### Objective 1: Establish a precedent of routine sustainable practices

Strategy 1.1: Top-Down participation & acceptance			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
1.1.1	Promote Green Routine strategies during VACO new employee orientation	Jan. 2010	HRM, OAEM & Managers
1.1.2	Include Environmental Stewardship as a part of Executive Performance Plans	June 2010	HRM & Managers
Strategy 1.2: Bottom-Up participation & acceptance			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
1.2.1	Designate 1 or 2 Green Champions in each staff office and Administration to promote Green Routine actions	Jan. 2010	
1.2.2	Develop a Green Team to assess progress implementation of strategies and gather results	Jan. 2010	
Strategy 1.3: Leverage technology in communicating plans, strategies & successes			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
1.3.1	Update content and maintain Green Routine website	Jan. 2010	OAEM & OIT
1.3.2	Use VACO Daily News alerts, VACO webpage and articles to promote Green Routine website and events	Jan. 2010	OPA
1.3.3	Watch the Senior Mgmt video on Green Initiatives	Jan. 2010	
1.3.4	Utilize the Learning Management System (LMS)	Feb. 2010	EES

Anticipated results:

1. Reinforcement of Green Routine behavior modifications
2. Easily accessible information on how to implement the actions

To use these styles for all documents: Make any additional style changes to suit your needs. When you are happy with your settings for fonts and line spacing, set these styles as the default set for all new documents. Here's how: on the **Home** tab, click **Change Styles**, point to **Style Set**, and then click **Save as Quick Style Set**. Type a name for this style set, then click **Save**. You can now apply this style set in new documents by selecting it from the Style Set list.

### Layout and Printing Tips

Tables: Consider using tables to lay out multiple columns of data across the page.

Distribute Electronically: Consider saving your document to XPS or PDF format and distributing electronically (via e-mail, shared server, or web site) for online viewing.

Automatic Paper-Saving Adjustments: When printing, have Word reduce the number of pages in your document by using the **Shrink One Page** option available in Print Preview.

Printing Multiple Pages per Sheet: Print multiple sheets per page using the Zoom option, **Page per sheet**, in the Print dialog box. Many printers also offer this type of option in the printer Properties dialog box, and you may get faster output by making this choice with the printer rather than through Word. (Use the setting in Word or your printer only, not both.)

### More Paper Tips When Printing

Duplex Printing: If your printer supports this option, use duplex (or two-sided) printing.

Columns: For documents with a large number of short lines, consider using table columns to place multiple columns of data across the page.

Source: Microsoft Office Online design templates

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/results.aspx?qu=conservation&av=TPL000>

## Paper-Saving Tips

There are a number of settings, detailed below, which conserve space for documents that are viewed primarily online but may also be printed. Here are Microsoft Word 2007 instructions for making these settings the default for your new documents.

### Margins

Margins are set to 0.5" on all sides, to maximize available document space.

Using headers and footers: If you plan to use a header or footer for your document, you should adjust the top or bottom margin or change the header or footer distance from edge setting in the Page Layout dialog box.

To use these margins for all documents: Open a new document (which will be based upon your Normal template), and set your margins and header/footer distance as desired. Click the **Page Layout** tab, click the Dialog Box Launcher below the **Page Setup** group, and then, in the **Page Setup** dialog box, click the **Default** button.

### Styles

The Traditional style set has been selected for this document, with some modifications to eliminate excess white space. Paragraph spacing before heading styles has been slightly decreased, and the Office theme fonts have been selected.

Line Spacing: If you wish to adjust the spacing above headings and between paragraphs, modify the corresponding Heading and Normal styles.

Character Spacing: If you wish to compress the spacing between characters to fit more characters per line, Word provides a kerning feature. On the **Home** tab, in the **Font** group, click the **Font** Dialog Box Launcher. In the **Format Font** dialog, on the **Character Spacing** tab, select the **Kerning for fonts** check box and set the value you want.

## Objective 2: Implement the sustainability principles of reduce, reuse and recycle.

Strategy 2.1 : Put into practice Green Meetings Reduce Principle: Paper and Energy Conservation			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
2.1.1	Print multiple PowerPoint slides per page	Jan. 2010	
2.1.2	Use projectors rather than handouts (if available)	Jan. 2010	
2.1.3	Print black & white handouts rather than color when applicable	Jan. 2010	
2.1.4	Eliminate the use of event flyers distributed at building entrances	Jan. 2010	
2.1.5.	When sending meeting announcements, include reminder to turn off lights	Jan. 2010	
2.1.6	Email handouts before meetings, giving attendees the option to print	Jan. 2010	
Strategy 2.2: Reduce Paper Waste and Eliminate Unnecessary Printing Reduce Principle: Paper and Energy Conservation			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
2.2.1	Mandate all printers default to duplex (double-sided) printing if available	Nov. 2009	OAL & Managers
2.2.2	Print only what is necessary and encourage less color printing (default to grayscale or black & white)	Jan. 2010	
2.2.3	Remove desktop printers that do not print duplex	Jan 2010	Managers & OIT

Anticipated results:

1. Decreased paper purchases
2. Reduced toner cartridge purchases
3. Reduced maintenance on printers and copiers
4. Decreased paper waste for recycling

Strategy 2.3: Improve Electricity Efficiencies Reduce Principle: Energy Conservation			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
2.3.1	Turn off lights in individual cubicles and offices when appropriate (i.e. at the end of day or during periods of absence > 2 minutes)	Oct. 2009	
2.3.2	Unplug cell phone and PDA chargers when not in use (to reduce unnecessary electric loads)	Nov. 2009	
Strategy 2.4: Establish and promote the exchange of unused supplies Reduce and Reuse Principle: Save money and resources by sharing and exchanging unused supplies			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
2.4.1	Create a temporary space for unused supplies, either building specific or within individual offices	June 2010	
2.4.2	Conduct periodic office supply swaps (virtual or physical) that allow employees and offices to exchange used or unneeded supplies rather than purchase new ones.	June 2010	Greening VACO Work-group & OIT

Anticipated results:

1. Reinforcement of Green Routine behavior modifications
2. Cost savings due to office supply sharing and waste reduction
3. Energy cost savings

## Greening Your Off-Site Meetings and Conferences

Here are 10 easy tips you can apply to any meeting to make it more environmentally responsible:

1. **Put it in writing.** Establish an environmental statement or policy for the meeting, and get buy in for it from the meeting host organization's management. Share the policy with suppliers, attendees and speakers. Click here for a [sample](#) (DOC file).
2. **Use paperless technology.** Use new media and electronic technology to cut down your paper use. Create a conference web site; offer electronic registration and confirmation; and advertise using the web and/or email.
3. **Meet local.** Reduce distances traveled by speakers and attendees. Choose a host city that is close to as many attendees as possible. Within the city choose a venue and hotel that are close to the airport and within walking distance of each other.
4. **Recycle.** Ask your hotel and meeting venue to provide visible and accessible recycling services for paper, metal, plastic and glass.
5. **Bulk up.** Have your food & beverage service provider use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, pepper, cream and other condiments.
6. **Lighten your stay.** Choose a hotel that offers a linen reuse program and bulk dispensers for shampoos and soaps in guest suites.
7. **Eat green.** Have meals planned using local, seasonal produce.
8. **Close the recycling loop.** Have all printed materials published on recycled paper, using vegetable-based inks, and printed on both sides of the page.
9. **Save energy.** Coordinate with the meeting venue to ensure that lights and air conditioning will be turned off when rooms are not in use.
10. **Spread the word!** Tell attendees, speakers and the media about your success. You'll be surprised - green efforts are contagious.

Source: [www.BlueGreenMeetings.org](http://www.BlueGreenMeetings.org)

## Easy Resource and Energy Conservation Strategies

(See 3-5 for "how-to" paper-saving tips)

### Paper Conservation

- Use double-sided copying whenever possible
- Single-space documents
- Reduce margin size to prevent white space and pages with little text.
- Review documents on the computer screen before printing
- Collect and reuse paper already used on one side (for example, for drafts and internal memos)
- Use scrap paper for memos and telephone pads
- Circulate and share copies of internal publications and documents
- Post office announcements on bulletin boards
- Faxing:
  - Scan and email documents or when faxes are necessary, eliminate fax cover sheets or use alternatives such as removable sticky notes;
  - program your fax to deliver "confirmation" sheets only for failed communications;
  - update your "broadcast" fax lists;
- Use reusable or two-way envelopes and mailing pouches (for example, for inter-office and interdepartmental communications)

### Energy Conservation

- Turn off unnecessary lights
- Turn off office and/or overhead lights if possible when leaving the office for meetings, etc.
- Use natural lighting and turn off lights near windows if possible
- If possible, use task lighting to directly illuminate work areas
- Unplug equipment that drains energy even when not in use (i.e. cell phone chargers, BlackBerry chargers, fans, coffeemakers, radios, etc.)
- Close or tilt window blinds to block direct sunlight to reduce cooling needs during warmer months, and open blinds in winter months
- Copy only what you need
- Use reusable coffee mugs instead of disposable cups
- Space heaters are prohibited, they use large amounts of energy and present a fire risk.

Strategy 2.5: Recycle Principle			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
2.5.1	Do not shred paper that can be recycled (e.g., newspapers, unclassified memos and documents, etc.)	Oct. 2009	
2.5.2	Recycle all materials for which collection is available (e.g., bottles, cans, toner cartridges, cardboard, etc.)	Oct. 2009	

### Objective 3: Ensure the acquisition of green products and services

Strategy 3.1: Specify green products and services when using purchase cards and contracts			
#	Action	Target Date	Lead
3.1.1	When purchasing new electronics, choose products with Energy Star qualification. For electronic products for which there are EPEAT standards, choose EPEAT registered products. (as mandated) - <a href="http://www.energystar.gov">www.energystar.gov</a> and <a href="http://www.epeat.net">www.epeat.net</a>	Oct. 2009	
3.1.2	When purchasing offices supplies and furniture, choose recycled, biobased, and other environmentally preferable products (as mandated) - <a href="http://www.fedcenter.gov/Documents/Index.cfm?id=11767">www.fedcenter.gov/Documents/Index.cfm?id=11767</a>	Oct. 2009	

Anticipated results:

1. VACO compliance with federal statutes, executive orders, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation.
2. Increased market demand for green products and services
3. Reduced environmental impacts of VACO acquisitions

## VACO Toolkit

This Toolkit contains specific green recommendations, helpful hints, and resources that may be used by all types of VACO employees (i.e., staff, managers, and executives) as we implement the Greening Action Guide.

### How to Start Greening Your Office Environment

- Schedule a meeting
- Select a Green Champion in your office
- Conduct a baseline assessment of current practices within your office
- Set goals and priorities from assessment
- Developing an Office Greening Action Guide (see template on page 3-7)
- Develop an easily-adaptable system to demonstrate progress towards goals
- Create a Green “buddy system” among interested staff to encourage continued support of goals

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### Green Champions: Who in your office will lead the greening initiatives?

The VACO Green Routine Working Group recommends selecting a Green Champion in your office. The most successful eco-friendly initiatives require this leader help spearhead the efforts. Offices will see the best results where these champions and their offices are both accountable for and rewarded for their environmental awareness and monitoring of employee work habits.

Role of Green Champions:

- Remind co-workers to reduce, reuse and recycle.
- Help employees follow the tips provided in this Toolkit.

Such practices are:

1. Double-sided printing if possible
2. Print only when necessary
3. Strive for electronic meetings; avoid paper copies
4. Print in black & white; use color only when necessary
5. Set monitor to turn off after 10 minutes or less
6. Turn off all cubical and office lights when not in use
7. Discard all paper waste in paper recycle bins
8. Make sure all used printer cartridges are recycled