


November 2008

## Going Green

 by Nicole Goldman,  
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Businesses, as well as homeowners, are concerned with steps they can take to be more eco-friendly. The motivations may be similar for either group, but the actions that need to be taken can go along very different paths.

Perhaps one of the easiest steps that any business can begin with is recycling. Many facilities, landlords and waste disposal companies may not be providing the necessary services to make this a simple step, but most of our towns (Falmouth included) actually mandate that these services be provided. Ask at your facility if you can get an extra dumpster out back that accepts paper and cardboard and start there.

Inside you will need to provide the proper bins for you and your employees to separate out unwanted and excess paper and cardboard, so that recycling is an easy task rather than an onerous one. Place large containers in central collection areas, and smaller containers under each desk or work area. Instruct the cleaning staff on how to properly

collect and keep this part of your trash separate.

Your waste disposal company will be able to resell the separated paper trash and should provide this service to you and the facility at no extra cost. The waste disposal company has an incentive to provide the service and you should take advantage of this option as soon as possible. If you can persuade them to also provide a separate receptacle for plastics, aluminum and glass, you can get your employees on this bandwagon as well. Remember that it is important to make the task seamless. If necessary, assign an employee each month to be in charge of compliance – someone who can gently urge fellow staff to make the minimal additional effort to do the right thing. It is a cost effective measure and an important ecological effort that will prevent waste from ending up being incinerated, or winding up in a landfill.

For additional information, log on to [www.ggreendesign.com](http://www.ggreendesign.com) where you can find more tips on how to save money and our planet by beginning your recycling program today.

January 2009

## What's in your air?



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Take a deep breath...

But beware! Is your indoor air quality healthy enough to breathe? Are there toxins in your building materials, old air filters and carpets? Are there mites or mold in the air ducts creating a fouled atmosphere to work in? Is this creating sickness and allergies?

These questions may sound extreme but in actuality, many of the buildings we work in, from offices to restaurants to store fronts, have had their indoor air quality compromised by one or more of these factors. There are steps you can take however, which will make your workplace a healthier, greener space to spend the majority of your wakeful hours.

What you can't see can kill you, and what you can smell can really hurt you, so begin cleaning up your working environment by using non-toxic cleaners which do not emit harmful chemicals into the atmosphere. There are dozens of brands available from the supermarket to specialty shops. Select one by giving each the sniff test. If it doesn't make you sneeze or gag, and lists some or all of its natural ingredients, try it out. I have some particular favorites such as Greening The Cleaning, and Method. These non-toxic cleaners

are not only a pleasure to use, but they are very effective at their intended task.

How about those air filters – have they been changed lately. Not only do clogged air filters cut down on the efficiency of furnaces and air-conditioners, to name a few, but they also can contribute a lot of unwanted dust, made up of dirt, mold and other irritants that can be causing everything from allergies to asthma for everyone on site. These issues can lead to sick days and lost working hours, so switch out those filters as soon as possible.

If problems continue, or there are issues with smells, try an air purification system. There are many different types of choose from; ionization systems negatively charge the air and force dust to the floor; others have HEPA filters which filter out pet dander, viruses, pollen, dust mites, mold spores, odors, and bacteria. We use one from Ecoquest that changes air particles into Hydroxyl ions, a gaseous form of hydrogen peroxide. It makes the air smell fresh, and kills unwanted pollutants from your air.

These are just the beginning steps you can take to improve your indoor air quality. The rewards will be evident in the health, energy and fitness of your staff and clients. For more information try logging on to <http://www.epa.gov/iaq>.