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Top Tips for Improving Your Resource Efficiency - Environmental Management System

Developing an Environmental Management System

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An Environmental Management System (EMS) will define environmental responsibilities for all staff and help them to understand the impact of their actions. Your EMS:

- Will help minimise impacts and record performance against targets set for your business.
- Can be audited (and will be if you are externally certified). Will help you reduce waste and associated costs.
- Ensure that improvements continue through on-going development and monitoring of the system and that staff at all levels are engaged.
- Businesses can usually save at least 1% of their turnover at little or no cost by improving their resource efficiency. Improving your resource efficiency will:
    - Reduce your overheads and increase your profitability
    - Help you to comply with health, safety and environmental legislation
    - Enhance your image with customers, employees and the local community
    - Improve your workplace and local environment.
- There are several approaches to implementing a formal EMS. You can develop your own system in-house, follow the guidelines of the International Standard (ISO 14001), the EC's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) or the British Standard (BS 8555) for small and medium sized businesses.
- You can also decide whether to pursue formal certification for these standards or not.
- To implement and EMS you need:
    - A good knowledge of your organisation's practices and environmental impacts
    - To ensure systems for monitoring performance and improvements are in place.
- As a starting point, before you implement an EMS 'waste mapping' should be undertaken to help you understand how you are using resources and where waste is occurring. WRAP's step by step guide 'Waste Mapping – Your Route to More Profit' is designed to be a first step towards tackling resource waste and becoming more resource efficient. Visit:

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http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/waste-mapping-your-route-more-profit

- You will also need to implement an Environmental Policy to outline how your organisation seeks to minimise its impact on the environment. Writing a policy needn't be a complex process. It should include your commitments to reduce your effects on the environment and should be realistic and achievable. For more information see WRAP's Finding Cost Savings: Resource Efficiency for SMEs **(www.wrap.org.uk/content/finding-cost-savings-resource-efficiency-smes**)
- WRAP's guide to Environmental Management Systems contains practical advice for developing an EMS. Organisations can work through the guide, section by section, using it to support them during the development of systems and processes necessary for their own EMS.
- Visit: **www.wrap.org.uk/content/your-guide-environmental-management-systems-ems**

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