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Top Tips for Improving Your Resource Efficiency - Retail

Retail

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The retail sector produces a significant amount of waste, over 9 million tonnes a year. The disposal costs alone of this waste are likely to be about £400 million. When the true cost of waste is factored in (e.g. lost time, materials, water, treatment and storage costs), the actual cost is likely to be over £2 billion.

- You could reduce both food and packaging waste and cut CO2 emissions by examining each stage of a product's life cycle to determine where efficiencies can be made. This should cover every step from design, production, processing, manufacturing, transportation, storage, refrigeration and distribution.
- Identify ways to prevent and reduce packaging waste by undertaking an audit of your packaging. Include all types of packaging, on the shelf, secondary and tertiary.
- Ask suppliers to use re-usable packaging and deliver products in re-usable packaging where possible.
- Try and source supplies locally and when delivering and see if you can reduce the number of journeys by maximising loads and effective route planning.
- Make sure heating, boiler, air-conditioning and lighting systems are correctly programmed and maintained.
- A lot of water and money is literally flushed away. For relatively little investment in equipment such as cistern dams, flow restrictors, aerators and trigger action taps or guns for hoses you can make notable savings.
- Do you have leaks or dripping taps, do your taps turn off fully? A dripping tap can waste more than 5,500 litres of water per year.
- Do your washrooms use dual-flush systems? Cistern dams, flow restrictors or percussion taps can all reduce water use.
- Installing taps that are self-closing or with infrared sensors will reduce water use and improve hygiene. Regular maintenance of taps will ensure that soap deposits and scale doesn’t cause leaks or jammed taps. Showers should also be maintained to avoid blockages and reduced performance.
- If your organisation handles over 50 tonnes of packaging annually and has a turnover of over £2 million/year, then you need to comply with the Producer

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Responsibility Regulations and obligated packaging producers must register as a packaging producer every year.

- Lighting accounts for 20 per cent of all electrical energy use. Simple measures like occupancy controlled switching and time switching can reduce costs.
- Refrigeration costs can be substantial. Simple measures can reduce energy consumption up to 20 per cent. Maintaining equipment, avoiding over stocking and educating staff with clear instruction sheets can make notable improvement. Check that units are not running at a temperature lower than necessary and make sure cabinets are not placed in hot areas with inadequate ventilations.
- WRAP has a number of resources available for the retail sector including tools, guidance, market sector reports and more. Visit **http://www.wrap.org.uk/category/sector/retail** for more information

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