

Earth Hour. Are you in?

Help your office prep for Earth Hour

CNW—With Earth Hour just around the corner this Saturday, March 26th (www.earth-hour.org), the environment will naturally be top of mind with people across the country.

In Canada, the typical office powers dozens of computers daily and uses thousands of sheets of paper annually. But by adopting some new habits and making a few minor changes to the workplace, Canadians can make a big difference at both home and work - with minimal effort.

Here are Canon Canada's top five tips for environmental conservation at the office:

1) Make digital scans of hardcopy documents. Start fine tuning your scanning skills and contribute to a healthier planet. By scanning your important documents into digital versions, you can significantly reduce your paper usage. Once a document is digital, you can bypass the photocopier or fax machine and send scans to co-workers electronically to shrink your environmental footprint even more.

2) Print double-sided. Remember when your teachers would lecture you to use both sides of the page? Those days of being frugal have taken a decidedly environmental turn. Set your printer default preferences to print on both sides of the paper and become your office's environmental champion. You'll be amazed at how much paper you'll save.

3) Reduce Printing through electronic mailboxes. Have you ever seen that large pile of unclaimed print jobs at the end of the day next to the office printer? Instead of choosing the "print"

function, many office printers also have a "store" function that helps reduce waste and costs. Storing your documents securely and locally before printing reduces the amount of unclaimed documents that are printed in an office. Users manually release only those print jobs they really require.

4) Consolidate multiple copiers, faxes and scanners into multifunction devices. Make the switch from the three Ps to the three Rs. Avoid the paper, plastic and power combination for something a little more streamlined. Consider moving to multifunction devices (devices that combine printing, scanning and faxing in one). These devices are as easy on the environment as they are on your time. Reducing a company's technology footprint through multifunction technology is a cost effective way for businesses to make the most of their resources while keeping environmental footprints in check.

5) Look for a printer with a low power requirement. Today's office printers and faxes are faster than ever and as a result, typically spend only one hour a day or less actually printing. In many cases, office printers may sit idle up to 80 per cent of the time. Looking for an office printer that has a low wattage in a "sleep" state can dramatically reduce your total electrical consumption. The best devices on the market consume no more than 1 watt, which is about the same as a single bulb on a string of LED lights. Combining several devices into one energy efficient multifunction printer will save even more electricity.

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