

# Sustainable Practices

## Hotels & Lodging Facilities

[www.tnsustainabletourism.com](http://www.tnsustainabletourism.com)



Hotels and other lodging facilities have literally dozens of opportunities to minimize their impact on the environment, just by making some simple, common-sense changes – and **almost all of them can save your facility money!!** Many facilities are already doing a lot of these, and don't even think of them as helping the environment. Take a few minutes to go through the items on this list and you may be surprised at the sustainable methods that you are already utilizing. Make sure your customers know about the good things you are doing for the environment.

**Optional Linen Service.** Sheets and towels are not automatically changed every day during a visitor's stay, thus decreasing usage of water, energy, and harmful detergents.

- ♻️ Train house cleaners on process for optional linen service
- ♻️ Purchase water-efficient washers and dryers ([www.Energystar.gov](http://www.Energystar.gov))
- ♻️ Use non-phosphate, non-toxic, and biodegradable laundry detergents.
- ♻️ Minimize the use of bleach and chlorinated chemicals are used only where there is no less toxic alternative, and only in minimal amounts.
- ♻️ Use of linens service providers that employ "wet" versus "dry" cleaning

**Recycling.** Recycling is probably the most visible sign to your guests that your facility is *green*, and it can be one of the most difficult services to arrange. However, you should strive to at least provide **the opportunity for guests to recycle** cans, bottles, etc. A written explanation available of the recycling opportunities that the accommodation provides, and staff should be able to address this with guests.

- ♻️ Glass
- ♻️ Aluminum Cans
- ♻️ Steel Cans
- ♻️ Composting of excess food
- ♻️ Grease Recycling
- ♻️ Plastic
- ♻️ Office Paper
- ♻️ Toner cartridges
- ♻️ Newspaper
- ♻️ Cardboard
- ♻️ Packing Supplies
- ♻️ Fluorescent Lamps (required by EPA-RCRA law)
- ♻️ Batteries (required by EPA-RCRA law for NiCd and Lead-Acid)
- ♻️ Electronics equipment – computers, etc (required by EPA-RCRA law)

**Water Conservation.** The facility should have a plan for conserving water that considers the use of water-saving faucets, showerheads, and toilets, leak detection, and an effective landscape watering plan.

- ♻ Tracking overall waste bills
- ♻ Bulk Soap Dispensers instead of individual soaps
- ♻ Fill up shampoo bottles
- ♻ Instruct housekeeping to save and reuse unopened items
- ♻ Eliminate the use of Styrofoam
- ♻ Use Dishware and Glassware & Minimize use of Disposables
- ♻ Disposable containers made from: bio-based materials, recycled content, compostable material
- ♻ Non-bleached napkins and coffee filters
- ♻ Provide condiments and cream and sugar, etc, in bulk
- ♻ Use of water pitchers that minimize use of single-use bottles
- ♻ Donation of excess food from events
- ♻ Effective food inventory control to minimize wastes
- ♻ Purchase locally grown produce and other foods
- ♻ Filtering of grease rather than recycling
- ♻ Organic- and “sustainably-grown” foods (<http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues>)
- ♻ Purchase recycled-content paper-towels and toilet paper
- ♻ Encouraging suppliers to minimize packaging and other waste materials
- ♻ Purchasing from vendors and service providers with a commitment to the environment
- ♻ 2-sided copies / printing
- ♻ Use electronic correspondence and forms
- ♻ Purchase recycled content paper / toilet tissue
- ♻ Using “Green” Cleaners ([www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)) that are dispensed in bulk
- ♻ Installation of high-efficiency hand-dryers ([www.cleanlink.com/sm/article.asp?id=2387](http://www.cleanlink.com/sm/article.asp?id=2387))
- ♻ Purchase of durable equipment and furniture
- ♻ Purchase “low-VOC” carpets and fabrics
- ♻ Use of reused building materials or those from sustainable sources
- ♻ Use of Latex Paint
- ♻ Reuse of paint thinners
- ♻ Proper recycling and/or disposal of thinners and solvents (required by EPA-RCRA)
- ♻ Preventative maintenance of all appliances, HVAC systems, plumbing, and vehicles
- ♻ Last-in/first-out inventory & effective labeling systems
- ♻ Less toxic materials
- ♻ Minimize use of pesticides and herbicides
- ♻ Use “integrated pest management” (IPM) - [www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm)

**Energy Conservation.** The facility should have a plan in place that encourages the replacement of lighting and equipment to energy-efficient alternatives such as compact-fluorescent lighting, LED Exit signs, lighting sensors, efficient heating and cooling, and *EnergyStar*/energy-efficient computers and other equipment.

**Water Conservation & Efficiency.**

- ♻ Tracking overall water usage and wastewater
- ♻ Preventative maintenance of drips and leaks
- ♻ Water-flow metering to discover leaks and areas of high use

- ♻️ High efficiency dishwashers
- ♻️ Discouraging water-based cleanup (sweep first)
- ♻️ Microfiber technology mops
- ♻️ Low flow restrictors on faucets and showerheads
- ♻️ Low flow toilets or Waterless urinals
- ♻️ Effective landscape management plan which utilizes drought tolerant species, metering and rain gauges, and minimizes lawn areas.
- ♻️ Rain gardens
- ♻️ Green roof development ([www.greenroofs.com](http://www.greenroofs.com))
- ♻️ Cisterns and drip-line irrigation
- ♻️ Rain barrels ([www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/stormwater.htm](http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/stormwater.htm))
- ♻️ Effective storm water management
- ♻️ Minimization of impervious areas (paving, concrete, etc)
- ♻️ Vegetative buffers around streams and ponds

### Energy Conservation & Efficiency

- ♻️ Tracking overall energy bills and set a numeric goal to reduce
- ♻️ Consider the pollution factor of your energy usage by using a pollution calculator, such as [www.cleanerandgreener.org/resources/pollutioncalculator.htm](http://www.cleanerandgreener.org/resources/pollutioncalculator.htm)
- ♻️ High efficiency compact fluorescent light bulbs in all canned spotlights & in rooms
- ♻️ Install LED Exit Signs - [www.energystar.gov/ia/business/small\\_business/led\\_exitsigns\\_techsheets.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/small_business/led_exitsigns_techsheets.pdf)
- ♻️ High efficiency fluorescent ballasts and lamps (T-5's & T-8's)
- ♻️ Use of ceiling fans
- ♻️ High Efficiency Heating & Air Conditioning (HVAC)
- ♻️ Individual thermostats for each room
- ♻️ Use of natural lighting
- ♻️ Solar panels
- ♻️ Lighting sensors
- ♻️ Purchase Energy Star-rated computers, copiers, appliances, etc. ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))
- ♻️ Thermal-rated windows and insulation
- ♻️ Use of directional (downward-facing) lighting in parking areas and other outdoor areas
- ♻️ Design and operation of buildings that are "LEED" certified ([www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org))
- ♻️ Purchase of "Green Tags" or "Renewable Energy Certificates" to offset the additional cost of using energy from renewable sources. (See [www.green-e.org](http://www.green-e.org))
- ♻️ Purchase fuel-efficient vehicles or Hybrids
- ♻️ Use Energy Star's Benchmarking Tools for the Hospitality Industry  
[www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus\\_hospitality](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus_hospitality)

**Green Events Package.** The facility can offer a "green" or "environmentally-friendly" package for conferences, meetings, and other events. At a minimum, you can provide recycling at such events and be willing to work with "environmentally-aware" customers on other techniques to reduce wastes.

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***Thank you for support and commitment toward sustainable tourism in Tennessee.***

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Source for Green checklist: Virginia Green <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/virginiagreen/>