



VILLAGE OF HAWTHORN WOODS

GREEN BUSINESS ACTION RESOURCES

A GUIDE FOR GREEN BUSINESS PRACTICES

ECONOMIC VITALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

SOCIAL BENEFIT



GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAM

The Green Business Program of Hawthorn Woods includes:

Green Business Guidebook

The Green Business Guidebook covers the action items that are necessary for securing the Green Seal of Hawthorn Woods designation. Points and business categories are assigned for each action item.

Green Business Action Resources

The Green Business Action Resources gives more information and links to resources for exploring the completion of each action item. Recommended for businesses that want to learn more about the benefits and costs of each action.

Award Application & Reward Package

The Award Application and Reward Package lays out the Green Seal of Hawthorn Woods reward packages, including the award process, advertising benefits, and promotion guide. Describes the documentation needed to achieve the points for each action listed in the Green Business Guide.

Each document is an important component for providing tools for businesses to use to improve their sustainable development or green performance and certify that performance to potential customers.

The goal of the Green Business Program is to facilitate ongoing education and publicity about the characteristics and benefits of more sustainable businesses and seek collaboration with the business sector to support municipal sustainability.

WHY GO GREEN?

By following this guide, there is the opportunity to learn about how your business can create sustainable economic development, environmental impacts, and social benefits.

Putting in the effort to completing the actions in this guide can result in tangible benefits for your business, customers, and community.



ATTRACT CUSTOMERS

A greater competitive advantage comes from green-conscious customers who seek out a like-minded business that values sustainability as they do. Attracting employees who take pride in working for a green company may also lead to a workforce with greater purpose and motivation.



DIFFERENTIATE FROM COMPETITION

Green-conscious shoppers show brand loyalty when they know they are getting quality products and services and a commitment to sustainability from a local business owner. Demonstrate to customers your business promotes green business practices.



SAVE MONEY

By finding ways to reduce energy, waste, and water use you can create a healthier and more vibrant work environment and improve your bottom line.

BECOME A GREEN BUSINESS

To earn the prestigious Green Seal of Hawthorn Woods:

- Please complete enough actions for a total of 25 points to achieve base recognition.
- Apply for certification with the application form available at vhw.org/530/sustainability.
- Include in application if you have additional action items to present in overall point total.

ACTION ITEMS

WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. Buy products in bulk.

2. Encourage employees to use reusable cups, plates, utensils.

3. Purchase biodegradable and/or easily recyclable products.

4. Composting program leftover bin/produce compost food produce with landscape waste to WM organics

RESOURCES

Buying products in bulk is more environmentally friendly and fiscally efficient because of reduced transportation and packaging costs

By providing employees with reusable utensils in break rooms you prevent eating utensils ending up in landfills

Lower waste management costs as well as reduce landfill entering landfills.
[Biodegradable Product Listing](#)

Waste management does [compost pickup bins](#) for employee food waste.

5. Educate your employees on recycling resources in the community, implement a policy to use them.

SWALCO is a great resource for recycling items properly.

6. Buy local food produce and products.

Buying locally reduces energy use from transportation miles, natural resources from packaging, and keeps land from being industrially developed.
Environmental Benefits

7. Eliminate individual, single-use bottles of water for employees and guests.

Make a policy to not purchase water bottles for employees, meetings, or events. Consider installing water fountains or coolers.

8. Identify one disposable item to be eliminated, switch to a reusable option, or provide only upon request.

Reusables are more expensive upfront but offer cost savings in the long run.
EPA Reducing Food Waste and Packaging Toolkit

9. Consolidate online shipping products and deliveries to reduce packaging waste.

Reduce the amount of packaging required to deliver your items by saving deliveries for large orders.

10. Purchase 3 paper products with at least 30% post-consumer recycled material. (e.g. Printing paper, paper towels, envelopes, notepads, boxes, bags, etc.)

Meet with supplies or procurement department to draft eco paper purchasing policy.

11. Reuse product packaging or work with vendors to minimize and/or take back product packaging where possible.

3 Tips for Reducing Packaging Waste at Your Business

12. Provide at least one dish on the menu with a fair trade, organic, or local ingredient.

Fair Trade Certified
USDA Organic Certified
Local foods must within 100 miles from farm to table.

13. Eliminate the use of Styrofoam, minimize the amount of packaging, and only provide utensils, napkins, and condiments upon request for to-go orders.

14. Provide clear sorting for recycling and achieve a 50% recycling diversion rate.

Plastic bags get used on average for 12 minutes. They are hard to recycle, become litter, and break down into smaller toxic pieces. Styrofoam production is a source of air pollution hazardous to workers and takes up lots of space in landfills as a nonbiodegradable substance. Identify all to-go materials and switch packaging to compostable or recyclable options.

Contact [Waste Management](#) to determine what container size and collection rate are right for your business.

[SWALCO Recycling](#)

ENERGY

1. Check windows for air leaks regularly and update existing windows by caulking, adding coverings or using weatherstrips.

2. Get a free, on-site facility assessment for your business from ComEd, Lake Shore Gas, or a third party and implement at least one recommended action.

3. Use natural or task lighting, limiting overhead light use.

4. Change the settings on all computers and printers to go into sleep mode after 10 minutes of inactivity.

5. Replace 50% of lighting with LED light bulbs.

RESOURCES

Learn how to assess and fix air leaks in your business facility with [great tips from the Department of Energy here](#).

[ComEd Facility Assessment](#)
[Lake Shore Gas Assessment](#)

Lower energy use and carbon footprint by using natural or task lighting.

Configure devices to go into sleep mode when idle.

Conduct a lighting assessment or get a [ComEd Facility Assessment](#) and look into rebates on efficient lighting.

6. Install lighting controls, such as occupancy sensors in spaces of variable occupancy, daylighting controls, or time clocks.

7. Make a policy requiring the purchase of qualified products such as ENERGY STAR and EPEAT .

8. Purchase renewable energy certificates or carbon offsets from your utility.

9. Replace and improve your HVAC system.

10. Install Solar Panels per village code.

Identify common spaces such as bathrooms, closets, lounges, kitchens, or conference rooms that would suit lighting sensors.

ComEd [Bulb Selection](#) and [Incentives](#)

[Energy Star](#)
[EPEAT](#)

Purchase 100% renewable energy from a certified provider to ensure credibility.

[EPA Guide to Green Power](#)

Improve energy use and cost savings with more efficient HVAC systems.

While solar panels may have higher upfront costs, they can save money over the long term and are more environmentally friendly in the long run.

[ComEd](#)

WATER

1. Make a policy requiring the purchase of water savings certified qualified products.

2. Educate employees on water efficiency practices.

3. Install low flow faucet aerators on all restroom sinks.

4. Replace all pre-rinse spray valves with low flow ones.

5. Switch all-purpose cleaning products to low toxic cleaning products.

6. Switch salon sprayers to water-conserving models.

RESOURCES

Discuss with staff in charge of purchasing appliances and discuss [WaterSense](#) equipment with vendors. Draft a policy.

Meet with staff and present recommendations and tips to use water more efficiently.

Install low flow aerators with a maximum 1.5 and minimum .8 gal/min flow rate.

Install pre-rinse spray valves with a goal of 1.28 gal/min flow rate.

Any [Green Seal](#), [Safer Choice](#), or [ECOLOGO](#) product rated 8 or above meet guidelines to being nontoxic and same effectiveness as a cleaner.

A water conservation model is anything less than 1.1 gal/min

MOBILITY

1. Install EV charging stations.

2. Install a bike rack (or have one nearby).

3. Conduct a survey of employee commute patterns and identify if it would be beneficial to install a bike rack or offer cost-share programs to employees who use mass transit to get to work.

LEADERSHIP

1. Install an ADA Compliant floor plan, or implement 3 strategies that show you are an accessible business.

2. Implement 3 strategies that show you are an age-friendly business.

3. Participate your business in local environmental non-profits and charities.

4. Give unserved food to employees or donate it to food kitchens and other community programs.

5. Sponsor village special events.

RESOURCES

EV stations incentivize the use of electric vehicles for commutes, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Installing a bike rack creates options for more environmentally friendly modes of transport to your business.

Ask employees how they get to work and how you can help encourage public transport or biking.

RESOURCES

Persons with disability are an important part of our community. Make your business accessible with these [10 Tips](#).

Older adults are the fastest growing population in the country. Use strategies found [HERE](#).

Grow Hawthorn Woods community by participating in local events and collaboration.

Reduce the amount of food waste going into landfills by connecting with food banks and soup kitchens.

[Greater Chicago Food Repository](#).

Contribute to the special events going on year-round at the village to support community culture and interaction.

NATURAL AREAS

1. Plant native plants around the property or in village provided recycled tree trunk planters.

2. Utilize green infrastructure on your property to decrease the total volume of stormwater runoff.

3. Have your landscape certified as conservation friendly or efficient.

4. Display seasonal floral or organic planters around business property.

5. Keep your business area free of litter and debris.

6. Volunteer at a village park for a restoration day.

RESOURCES

Survivability of native plants is high for attractive ornamentation of your business without chemical inputs.

Native plantings, planter boxes, rain gardens, permeable pavers, or rain barrels. [Benefits of Green Infrastructure](#)
[Native Plant List](#)

Return your landscaping to the biodiversity it once held [HERE](#).

Beautify the community by maintaining a rotation of seasonal decorations made of organic materials.

Besides being unsightly, litter and especially plastic pollution is a persistent threat to our soil and water systems.
[Plastic Pollution in the Great Lakes](#)

The parks department is always in need of volunteer service for a variety of ongoing environmental conservation projects

For information and resources for each action, as well as the reward package for certification, please visit www.vhw.org/530/Sustainability or call our Sustainability Coordinator for other questions.

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