2. Conducting a Green Business Self-Assessment

The following checklist, adapted from California Green Business Checklist (www.greenbusinessca.org) will help you document your current green practices and give you ideas for practices you may want to implement in the future to expand your green program.

Not all categories may be relevant to your organization, or there may be categories you wish to add. Feel free to modify this generic checklist as you take the first steps toward assessing your current sustainable/environmental practices.
If you are just starting to implement a green program, you may want to focus on the **bolded** items for your initial efforts.

Green Business Self-Assessment

Instructions:

☐   **Check 1st box if this is a current company practice.**

   ☐   **Check 2nd box if you are planning to make this a future company practice.**

SOLID WASTE

REUSE Materials.

☐ ☐	**A-1**	**Look in your garbage dumpster annually to see if there are items that could instead be reused by someone else or recycled.**
☐ ☐	A-2	Retailers: Offer incentives for customers who bring their own reusable bags, coffee mugs, etc. (or disincentives such as charging fees for bags).
☐ ☐	A-3	Give away or sell reusable bags (this is required for stores over 10,000 square feet).
☐ ☐	A-4	Have your customers return packaging to you for reuse.
☐ ☐	A-5	Reuse paper or plastic packaging materials in your own shipments.
☐ ☐	A-6	Designate a reuse area for office supplies such as binders, folders and staplers.
☐ ☐	A-7	Reuse garbage bag liners.
☐ ☐	A-8	Have your toner cartridges refilled for reuse.
☐ ☐	A-9	Donate furniture, supplies, scrap materials, etc., or use a waste exchange program where another business can take your unwanted items (www.calrecycle.ca.gov/CalMAX).

☐ Other

RECYCLE Materials.

☐ ☐	**A-10**	**Provide recycling containers at convenient and appropriate locations (i.e., lobbies, guest rooms, vending machines, kitchens, next to garbage containers, desks, etc.).**
☐ ☐	**A-11**	**Recycle all newspaper, office/mixed paper and junk mail.**
☐ ☐	**A-12**	**Recycle all metal cans, containers and aluminum foil.**
☐ ☐	**A-13**	**Recycle all plastic bottles and containers.**
☐ ☐	**A-14**	**Recycle all cardboard.**
☐ ☐	**A-15**	**Recycle all glass bottles and jars.**
☐ ☐	A-16	Compost landscape trimmings (green waste) and debris.
☐ ☐	A-17	Recycle wood, including pallets.
☐ ☐	A-18	Recycle CDs/DVDs.
☐ ☐	A-19	Recycle scrap metal.
☐ ☐	A-20	Compost food waste.

☐ Other

BUY Materials with Recycled Content.

☐ ☐	**A-21**	**Purchase copier/printer paper with at least 30% post consumer waste.**
☐ ☐	**A-22**	**Purchase paper towels with 35% post-consumer waste.**
☐ ☐	A-23	Purchase toilet seat covers and toilet paper with recycled content.
☐ ☐	A-24	Purchase carpet, carpet undercushion, or flooring. with recycled content.
☐ ☐	A-25	Purchase folders or other paper products with the highest recycled content available.
☐ ☐	A-26	Purchase tissues with the highest recycled content available.
☐ ☐	A-27	Purchase garbage bags with the highest recycled content available.
☐ ☐	A-28	Purchase or obtain previously used furniture, supplies or materials (calrecycle.ca.gov/CalMAX, freecycle.org, Craig's List). Provide examples.
☐ ☐	A-29	Purchase office/copier paper with 100% post consumer waste.
☐ ☐	A-30	Sell products made with recycled content.
☐ ☐	A-31	Use refilled or remanufactured laser and copier toner cartridges.
☐ ☐	A-31	Use refilled or remanufactured laser and copier toner cartridges.
☐ ☐	A-32	Purchase envelopes with the highest recycled content available.
☐ ☐	A-33	Purchase letterhead with the highest recycled content available.
☐ ☐	A-34	Purchase business cards with recycled content.
☐ ☐	A-35	For retail use or shipping, purchase boxes or bags with recycled content.
☐ ☐	A-36	Remodel/build with materials containing recycled content.

☐ Other

REDUCE Waste.

☐ ☐	**A-37**	**Eliminate individual bottles of water for employees and guests.**
☐ ☐	**A-38**	**Eliminate the use of polystyrene, such as Styrofoam, in beverages and food service ware.**
☐ ☐	**A-39**	**Retailers: If you provide disposable bags to your customers, you must primarily provide paper bags instead of plastic. Plastic bags should only be provided when necessary.**

☐ ☐	**A-40**	**If copiers and printers have duplex printing capability, duplex printing must be enabled. New machines must have duplex printing capability.**	
☐ ☐	A-41	In the lunch/break room, replace disposables with permanent ware (mugs, dishes, utensils, etc.) and use refillable containers for sugar, salt & pepper, etc. to avoid individual condiment packets.	
☐ ☐	A-42	For events, use reusable dishware when possible. If disposable dishware is necessary use recyclable or compostable options (require the same of caterers).	
☐ ☐	A-43	Work with vendors to: minimize and take back packaging (including empty containers), eliminate polystyrene (Styrofoam, bubble wrap, etc.) and/or take back used/damaged product for reuse or recycling.	
☐ ☐	A-44	Discourage the printing of emails and documents.	
☐ ☐	A-45	Subscribe to journals, trade magazines, etc. online rather than receiving hard copies.	
☐ ☐	A-46	Print on the back side of previously printed on paper. Either use a second tray of the printer for such paper or keep it stacked next to the printer for hand loading.	
☐ ☐	A-47	Buy products in returnable or reusable containers.	
☐ ☐	A-48	Reduce unwanted mail by the following: • Write to or call senders requesting removal from mailing list. • Return labels from duplicate mailings & subscriptions requesting all but one employee be removed. • Write "refused" on first class mail and return to sender. • Use an on-line service to help reduce junk mail (ex. 41 lbs., Green Dimes, Catalog Choice) or receive guidance and a PDF kit are at http://stopjunkmail.org. • Reduce catalogs at www.catalogchoice.org. • Purge your own mailing lists to eliminate duplication. Document the process.	
☐ ☐	A-49	Use electronic billing methods to invoice customers and receive payment.	
☐ ☐	A-50	Send and receive faxes directly from computers without printing.	
☐ ☐	A-51	Centralize purchasing to eliminate unnecessary purchases and ensure that all waste reduction purchasing policies are followed.	
☐ **Other**			

ENERGY

MAINTAIN Your HVAC & Refrigeration Equipment.

☐ ☐	**B-1**	**Clean permanent filters with mild detergents every two months (change replaceable filters every 2 months).**
☐ ☐	**B-2**	**Clean condenser coils of dust & lint.**
☐ ☐	**B-3**	**Clean evaporator coils of excessive frost.**
☐ ☐	**B-4**	**Inspect and repair economizers on AC systems.**
☐ ☐	**B-5**	**Complete regularly scheduled maintenance on your HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) and refrigeration system at least twice a year.**
☐ ☐	**B-6**	**Check entire system each year for coolant and air leaks, duct sealing, clogs, and obstructions of air intake and vents.**
☐ **Other**		

REDUCE Your Energy.

☐ ☐	**B-7**	**Replace all T-12 fluorescent lighting with energy-efficient T-8 or T-5 fixtures with electronic ballasts or other equivalent efficacy lighting.**
☐ ☐	**B-8**	**Replace incandescent bulbs with efficient compact fluorescents or other high efficiency lamps (lumens/watt > 50) where appropriate.**
☐ ☐	**B-9**	**Improve exit sign efficiency to less than 5 watts per sign by using LED signs, electroluminescent, photoluminescent or other applicable signs.**
☐ ☐	**B-10**	**Assign a person to monitor energy bills for sudden rises in use, and to track use over time.**
☐ ☐	B-11	Use office equipment with energy saving features (e.g., ENERGY STAR®) and ensure that ENERGY STAR® settings are enabled.
☐ ☐	B-12	Use power management software programs that save energy by automatically turning off idle monitors and printers (must be purchased separate from computer).
☐ ☐	B-13	Use sensors on vending machines and place machines in shaded areas.
☐ ☐	B-14	Use ENERGY STAR® qualified refrigerators.
☐ ☐	B-15	Reduce number of fixtures or lamps per fixture where appropriate.
☐ ☐	B-16	Use lighting controls such as dual technology occupancy sensors, bypass/delay timers, photocells, or time clocks, especially in low occupancy areas such as closets and restrooms.
☐ ☐	B-17	Use a 365 day programmable thermostat to control heating and air conditioning.
☐ ☐	B-18	Shade HVAC condensers, especially roof-top units.
☐ ☐	B-19	For air conditioned spaces, shade sun-exposed windows and walls using awnings, sunscreens, native shade trees or shrubbery.
☐ ☐	B-20	For air conditioned spaces, apply window film to reduce solar heat gain on clear, single-pane non-northern facing windows.
☐ ☐	B-21	Use energy-efficient double paned windows on at least 90% of windows.
☐ ☐	B-22	Use an energy management system for automated control and monitoring of heating, ventilation and lighting needs of the building.

☐	☐	B-23	Use an outside air intake (cool air takes less energy to compress).
☐	☐	B-24	Institute a policy that all electronic devices, lighting and room cooling units be turned off when not in use and use light switch reminders to remind staff to turn off the same.
☐	☐	B-25	Rearrange workspace to take advantage of areas with natural light and design for increased natural lighting when remodeling.
☐	☐	B-26	Install or use plug load controllers for office equipment that switches equipment off after working hours.
☐	☐	B-27	Use task lighting instead of lighting the entire area.
☐	☐	B-28	Set thermostat to 76° F for cooling, 68° F for heating; use timing devices to turn system down after hours.
☐	☐	B-29	Use a PG&E installed Smart AC programmable thermostat to control heating and air conditioning (see www.pge.com/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/ demandresponse/sac/).
☐	☐	B-30	Insulate all hot water pipes.
☐	☐	B-31	If purchasing new computers, buy EPEAT certified (www.EPEAT.net). If purchasing monitors, consider flat-screen LED monitors which consume approximately 1/3 less energy than larger ray tube monitors.
☐	☐	B-32	Control compressor system to ensure operation only during working hours.
☐	☐	B-33	Use ceiling fans (high edge of blade must go forward first in winter, forcing air down; reverse in summer).
☐	☐	B-34	Replace single or package A/C unit with one that exceeds Title 24 building standards.
☐	☐	B-35	Use weather stripping to seal air gaps around doors and windows.
☐	☐	B-36	Set hot water heaters to meet minimum sanitation requirements (typically 125-130 F).
☐	**Other**		

WATER

If you do not control your landscaping irrigation, you will need the cooperation of your property manager (or landscaper) to complete these measures.

CONSERVE Your Water.

☐	☐	C-1	**Install low-flow aerators in faucets and showerheads according to water district specifications. Your water district will check aerators in audit, and may provide them for free.**
☐	☐	C-2	**Assign a person to monitor water bills for sudden rises in use, and to track use over time. Call your water company should sudden rises occur.**
☐	☐	C-3	**Check the property for leaks every 6 months. Leaks in toilet tanks can be detected with leak detecting tablets, which may be available from your water company.**
☐	☐	C-4	**Use only dry methods to clean outdoor hard surfaces and post instructions for staff. Call your water company for any exceptions to this rule.**
☐	☐	C-5	**Install toilets with 1.6 gpf (gallon per flush) or less.**
☐	☐	C-6	Schedule your water company to make a presentation to staff to encourage water conservation at home. (Some water companies offer training and "take home" conservation kits.)
☐	☐	C-7	Go beyond the above 1.6 gpf toilets to 1.28 gpf HETs (high efficiency toilets). (Check both this measure and the one above.) Ask your water district about rebates for replacing older toilets >3.5 gpf.
☐	☐	C-8	Install high efficiency urinals that flush 0.5 gpf or less.
☐	☐	C-9	Post signs in restrooms and kitchen to encourage water conservation and to report leaks.
☐	☐	C-10	Change window cleaning schedule from "periodic" to "as required."
☐	☐	C-11	Provide additional urinals in men's restroom and reduce number of toilets (urinals use less water than toilets).
☐	**Other**		

Complete if you have landscaping.

☐	☐	C-12	**Test irrigation sprinklers quarterly to ensure proper operation and coverage and repair all broken or defective sprinkler heads/nozzles, lines and valves.**
☐	☐	C-13	**Install matched precipitation rate sprinkler heads in turf areas.**
☐	☐	C-14	**Water during early morning, pre-dawn hours to reduce water loss from evaporation.**
☐	☐	C-15	**Use repeat cycles when watering turf or shrubs to encourage percolation and deep root growth.**
☐	☐	C-16	Adjust the irrigation schedule monthly during irrigation season, or as needed.
☐	☐	C-17	Reduce area of turf.
☐	☐	C-18	Work with your water company to develop a site-specific "water budget" for your landscaped areas. Track your water use to ensure efficient watering.
☐	☐	C-19	Reduce irrigation system water pressure to no higher than 50 psi (pressure-reducing valves must be installed to do this).
☐	☐	C-20	Use reclaimed water for irrigation and other approved uses instead of potable water, if available.
☐	☐	C-21	Plant (or renovate using) drought tolerant plants and ground cover, preferably native species. Assistance may be available from your water department.
☐	☐	C-22	Group plants with similar water requirements together (hydrozone) on the same irrigation line, separating plants with different water requirements on separate irrigation lines.
☐	☐	C-23	Modify your existing irrigation system to include drip irrigation (or soaker hoses where feasible).
☐	☐	C-24	Apply at least 2 inches of mulch in non-turf areas, preferably with recycled wood chips.
☐	☐	C-25	Install rain shut-off devices or moisture sensors that turn off (or override) the irrigation system during rain.

☐ ☐	**C-26**	Install irrigation controllers that have at a minimum the following features: precise 1-minute runtime capability; a minimum of 3 separate programs; and 3 cycle start time features.	
☐ ☐	**C-27**	Install a self-adjusting weather-based irrigation controller that automatically tailors watering schedules to match local weather, plant types, and other site-specific conditions. Controller must be certified under the Irrigation Association's SWAT protocol.	
☐ **Other**			

POLLUTION PREVENTION

ASSESS any Potential Pollutants.

☐ ☐	**D-1**	**Assess chemicals used in your business by reviewing Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and Prop.65 warnings on labels. Substitute with less toxic alternatives if available. Track the amounts of hazardous waste generated, and dispose of at local hazardous waste programs.**

REDUCE Chemical Use.

☐ ☐	**D-2**	**Reduce chemicals (cleaners, pesticides, paints, etc.) used and stored, safely disposing of any unneeded products at the local Household Hazardous Waste Program.**
☐ ☐	**D-3**	**Replace all aerosols with pump dispensers.**
☐ ☐	**D-4**	**Work with your janitorial or building maintenance staff to use safer alternatives to potentially harmful products. Require the use of low toxic cleaning products such as those that meet Green Seal certification standards (www.greenseal.org). List products used.**
☐ ☐	**D-5**	**Use no products with added antibacterial agents, such as triclosan. This includes products used for hand washing, dishwashing and cleaning.**
☐ ☐	**D-6**	**Eliminate or reduce pesticides by using Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which includes good sanitation, acting only when needed, making physical changes to keep pests out, and, lastly, using less or non-toxic pesticides.** **1. Keep kitchen, waste storage and other areas clean to avoid attracting pests.** **2. When pest control is necessary, use barriers (such as caulking/sealing holes), traps, and lastly, less toxic pesticides (such as soaps, oils, microbials and baits). Apply only as needed (rather than on a routine schedule).** **3. If you contract with a pest control operator, choose one that is EcoWise Certified www.ecowisecertified.com), or specify in the contract that IPM and methods including non-chemical pest prevention and pest exclusion be used. Do not allow any outdoor perimeter spraying.**
☐ ☐	**D-7**	Do business with other "green" vendors or services, such as recognized Bay Area Green Businesses (listings at www.greenbiz.ca.gov). Provide examples:
☐ ☐	**D-8**	Use one or a few low-toxicity multipurpose cleaners, rather than many special-purpose cleaners.
☐ ☐	**D-9**	Replace standard fluorescent lights with low mercury fluorescent lights. Approved models can be found at www.sfenvironment.org/sfapproved.
☐ ☐	**D-10**	Use unbleached and/or chlorine-free paper products (copy paper, paper towels, napkins, coffee filters, etc.).
☐ ☐	**D-11**	Print promotional materials with vegetable or other low-VOC inks.
☐ ☐	**D-12**	Use low- or no-VOC paint products.
☐ ☐	**D-13**	Use natural or low emissions building materials, carpet, or furniture.
☐ ☐	**D-14**	Require your janitorial staff to use micro fiber dusters, towels and mops to trap dust particles.
☐ ☐	**D-15**	Eliminate the routine use of all disinfectants and sanitizers, unless needed to comply with Environmental Health.
☐ ☐	**D-16**	Purchase organically or locally grown foods and beverages for the office kitchen. List examples.
☐ ☐	**D-17**	Obtain a battery recharger for the office. Use rechargeable (instead of disposable) batteries for flashlights, radios, remote controls, etc.
☐ **Other**		

RECYCLE/REUSE Potential Pollutants.

☐ ☐	**D-18**	Properly store and recycle Universal Wastes as required by law. Designate a storage area for spent Universal Wastes, posting a sign and notifying employees of this area. Ensure that these are recycled (and not put into the garbage). Universal Wastes are: Spent fluorescent light tubes & bulbs, Electronic equipment (computers, cell phones, pagers, etc.) and Batteries (RBRC recycles these for free! www.rbrc.org).
☐ ☐	**D-19**	Recycle excess paint/solvents (keep only what's needed for touch ups, then give remainder to hazardous waste collection program, donate to anti-graffiti program, or return to contractor or manufacturer).
☐ ☐	**D-20**	Recycle used copier toner cartridges.
☐ ☐	**D-21**	Recycle used ink jet cartridges.
☐ ☐	**D-22**	Donate for reuse (not just recycle) electronic equipment. If they cannot be reused, take them to an "e-steward" for responsible recycling (www.ban.org/#ThePledge).
☐ **Other**		

REDUCE Vehicle Emissions.

☐ ☐	**D-23**	**Join the Air District's "Spare the Air" program (www.sparetheair.org) and notify staff of "Spare the Air" days.**

☐ ☐	D-24	Register with 511 at www.511.org/ to have staff assess rideshare possibilities for your employees (511 is your one-stop phone and web source for up-to-the-minute transportation information. It's FREE and available whenever you need it – 24/7 – from anywhere in the nine-county Bay Area.).
☐ ☐	D-25	Hire locally.
☐ ☐	D-26	Help employees rideshare by posting commuter ride sign-up sheets and providing other commuter incentive programs (e.g., rideshare incentive programs, guaranteed ride home in emergency situations, etc.) available at www.Rideshare.511.com.
☐ ☐	D-27	Offer telecommuting opportunities and/or flexible schedules so workers can avoid heavy traffic commutes.
☐ ☐	D-28	Provide secure bicycle storage for staff and customers.
☐ ☐	D-29	Convert company vehicles to low emission vehicles (electric, hybrid, natural gas or alternative fuels).
☐ ☐	D-30	Use biodiesel (100% or blends) or vegetable diesel in place of petrodiesel in vehicles.
☐ ☐	D-31	Install renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or wind generators. Specify system size.
☐ ☐	D-32	Buy renewable energy credits or green tags to offset the CO_2 emissions from your office's use of electricity and natural gas (see www.green-e.org).
☐ ☐	D-33	Offset your company's emissions by participating in PG&E's ClimateSmart Program: www.joinclimatesmart.com.
☐ ☐	D-34	Use route optimization software or have documented delivery plans.
☐ ☐	D-35	Offer employees pre-tax commuter benefits for transit, vanpool or biking costs. See www.rideshare.511.org/rideshare_rewards/.
☐ ☐	D-36	Complete a CO_2 or eco-footprint calculator to determine your own greenhouse gas emissions.
☐ ☐	D-37	Encourage employees and customers to bike and use public transit by posting bicycle ride maps and transit schedules/maps (see www.511.org).
☐	**Other**	

WASTEWATER

PREVENT Pollution.

☐ ☐	E-1	**If using water to clean parking or other outdoor areas, hire a BASMAA-certified mobile cleaner. Contractor must use equipment that collects wash water and disposes to sanitary sewer.**
☐ ☐	E-2	**Ensure that no wastewater enters a storm drain. "Only rain down the storm drain."**
☐ ☐	E-3	**Do not wash cars, equipment, floor mats or other items where run-off water flows straight to the storm drain.**
☐ ☐	E-4	**Clean private catch basins annually (by October 15th), before the first rain and as needed thereafter.**
☐ ☐	E-5	**Keep dumpsters covered and impermeable to rainwater. Keep them from overflowing and keep dumpster/parking areas clean.**
☐ ☐	E-6	**Locate all potential pollutants away from food preparation, service and storage areas as well as sewer and storm drains.**
☐ ☐	E-7	Post signs at targeted trouble spots (e.g., loading docks, dumpster areas, outside hoses) to explain proper practices to prevent pollutants from reaching storm drains.
☐ ☐	E-8	Regularly check and maintain storm drain openings and basins. Keep litter, debris and soil away from storm drains.
☐ ☐	E-9	Store any potentially hazardous materials securely, control access and rotate stock to use oldest material first.
☐ ☐	E-10	Routinely check for and address leaks, spills, and emissions of chemicals, paints, and cleaners. Repair any deficiencies.
☐ ☐	E-11	Clean outdoor surfaces by dry sweeping.
☐ ☐	E-12	Label all storm drains with "No dumping, Drains to Bay" message.
☐	**Other**	

GENERAL

GENERAL Measures.

☐ ☐	F-1	**Adopt a written environmentally preferable (or green) purchasing policy. Find examples at http://www.stopwaste.org/home/index.asp?page=439.**
☐ ☐	F-2	Inform your customers about what you're doing to be green. Examples: Post a list of your efforts in a visible location, promote green products or services as green, talk about it in your company newsletter, highlight your efforts on your website and link to the Green Business website, and offer tours that highlight your green-ness.
☐ ☐	F-3	Establish a 'green team' that can help guide efforts to green your business.
☐ ☐	F-4	Encourage employee participation in greening your business through employee orientations and trainings, employee evaluations, staff meeting discussions, company newsletters, brochures or other materials, and by having incentive or reward programs.
☐	**Other**	