

MRC Pontiac Environmental Policy



This environmental policy is aimed at helping employees and managers to make ecological decisions and develop greener habits. The MRC wants to improve their ecological footprint and the adoption of an environmental policy provides an interesting alternative to educate the employees. The principle of sustainable development, environmental protection and sensible use of resources are all priorities of the MRC. As a municipal service, the MRC wishes to share knowledge to promote the recovery and recycling of containers, packaging, and other materials produced as well as promote the importance of conserving resources. Therefore, the MRC is committed to changing the habits of staff and other external stakeholders to be greener, thereby constantly improving its environmental performance.

Environmental principal:

- Demonstrate to citizens that the MRC is committed to managing its environmental impacts in an environmentally conscious way.

Advantages to have an environmental policy:

- Help the MRC to respect the laws ;
- Improved relay of information to the employees regarding their responsibilities in environmental matters;
- Improved of procurement and costs;
- Conservation of raw materials and energy ;
- Development of positive relationships with business owners, insurers, clients, suppliers, and law authorities in local communities.

Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions

GHGs are the gas components in the ozone which trap infrared radiation emitted from the earth's surface, contributing to the greenhouse effect. The increase of CO₂, methane, and nitrous oxides in the atmosphere are thought to have lead to the current climate changes. For this reason, the MRC engages in diminishing GHG production by their employees and through educating the public.

The MRC will:

- Educate workers to carpool or use any other means of transportation that do not emit GHGs (walking, cycling, etc.);
- Encourage video conferencing when possible to decrease travelling to meetings, thereby reducing GHG emissions;
- Limit car idling time;
- Register the MRC Pontiac in the « Défi-climat » to reduce the GHG emissions and improve overall ecological footprint. In this way, personnel of the MRC will be encouraged to do the same.

Energy use

The greatest environmental benefit of reducing our energy demand in Quebec is the possibility of selling the rest of our production to the United States or Ontario, where electricity is mainly produced from coal thermal power plants, which emits large quantities of greenhouse gases.

The MRC will therefore:

- Educate employees to turn off lights, computers and electrical equipment when they leave their offices for;
- Control air conditioning and heating in the office. During hours when the office is closed (evening and weekends), heating and air conditioning will be reduced to lower energy demand;
- Buy energy-saving equipment. The next computers or appliances in cafeteria will be certified by “Energy-Star”, or another eco-friendly certification.

Supply purchasing

Buying locally will not only encourage the production and sale of goods and services on the territory, but will also reduce transportation costs and the emission of GHGs. Furthermore, buying ecological, recycled, or biodegradable products encourages industries that are environmentally friendly and improves the positive impact of citizens on the planet.

The MRC will :

- Buy recycled ink cartridges;
- Buy only recycled or certified paper;
- Educate the employees on the importance of buying recycled paper;
- Buy local products when possible and encourage employees to do the same at home;
- Encourage employees to share supplies with colleagues instead of buying;
- Buy materials and resources derived from a renewable source.
- Avoid buying products with over-packing and instead buy better quality products made with recycled materials.

Paper Use

More than 40% of wood harvested worldwide is used to make paper, therefore the MRC promotes a reduction paper consumption. In addition, the MRC will support sustainable forestry management and practices by using certified products, such as "Forest Stewardship Council" labelled products.

The MRC will :

- Apply the double-side printing function by default;
- Remove the user ID page during the printing;
- Reduce use of paper supplies (blocknotes, post-its) and use scrap paper;
- Encourage e-mail or telephone exchanges instead of mailing.

Waste management

The recuperation of paper and cardboard for recycling decreases the cost of garbage disposal by reducing the amount of waste sent to the landfill or incineration. As well, more paper recycling saves the use of raw materials such as wood. Composting provides another opportunity to recycle organic waste instead of including it with regular garbage. This approach allows us to use compost instead of chemical fertilizers that pollute groundwater.

The MRC proposes to:

- Continue composting and educate the employees concerning this practice;

- Keep recycle bins and composters in strategic places to encourage their use;
- Encourage MRC employees to use re-usable containers instead of disposable bags;
- Use non-disposable dishes in the lunch room.

Water Use

This resource is not inexhaustible in quantity. After having dried up shallow aquifers we now obtain water in deep aquifers that are millions of years old, therefore it is important to reduce water consumption. In addition, the treatment of drinking water which removes contaminants for healthy consumption is also associated with a high cost.

The MRC will:

- Encourage the employees to use reusable cups for drinks (coffee, water, tea etc.);
- Buy biodegradable and environmentally friendly supplies to reduce amount of hazardous substances in the environment (Cleaning supplies, Styrofoam cups, office supplies and other consumer products).

Food

The MRC will:

- Estimate closely the amount of food required to avoid waste;
- Provide some vegetarian meals;
- Choose caterers with sustainable development practices and policies;
- Provide sustainable tableware;
- Choose foods that are: in season, local, organic and Fair Trade.

Miscellaneous

The MRC will:

- Give periodic surveys using the policy to see if there is any improvement;
- Continue to sponsor a local charity, organization, or event with green initiatives;
- Share the environmental policy at meetings with other organizations, as well as emphasize the importance sustainable development.

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