

Our Sustainability Initiatives

We're in Business to Make
the World a Better Place.

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At Office Interiors, we value our environment. Our top priority is to create lasting value for our customers by building productive work environments that evolve and endure to promote a better world.

There's more to it than numbers – we're holding ourselves accountable to ensure we minimize the environmental impacts of our activities, whether it be by prioritizing the use of recycled, renewable, and low-emitting materials or improving energy efficiency at our facilities.

Using our core values to fuel our actions, we are shaping a future that protects the environment and fosters transformational social impact while sustaining a culture where people can feel empowered.

“Valuing our environment has always been important, but never more so than today,” says Jim Mills, President and CEO at Office Interiors, on his [note](#).

We take pride in investing our time and resources to ensure that we understand the regulations concerning environmental sustainability in every jurisdiction we do business in. We consult with the respective Department of Environments, Procurement, and other organizations like the Resource Recovery Fund Board in Nova Scotia to ensure that we are updated on all current policies and requirements.



1. Conscious Choices in Sourcing

We partner with manufacturers who are world leaders in environmentally friendly products. Making conscious choices in our partnerships helps us better serve not just our customers but also our planet.

Furniture

On our furniture side of the business, we have Haworth as our primary manufacturing partner who shares our vision of a greener future. According to them, sustainability is defined by “crafting each distinct organic workspace with minimal impact to our planet.”

Haworth products are designed to consider the environmental, social, and economic impact through sustainable material choices, waste-reducing engineering processes, avoidance of problematic chemicals and alignment with leading certifications. One of the noteworthy highlights from their [Corporate Social Responsibility Report from the previous year](#).

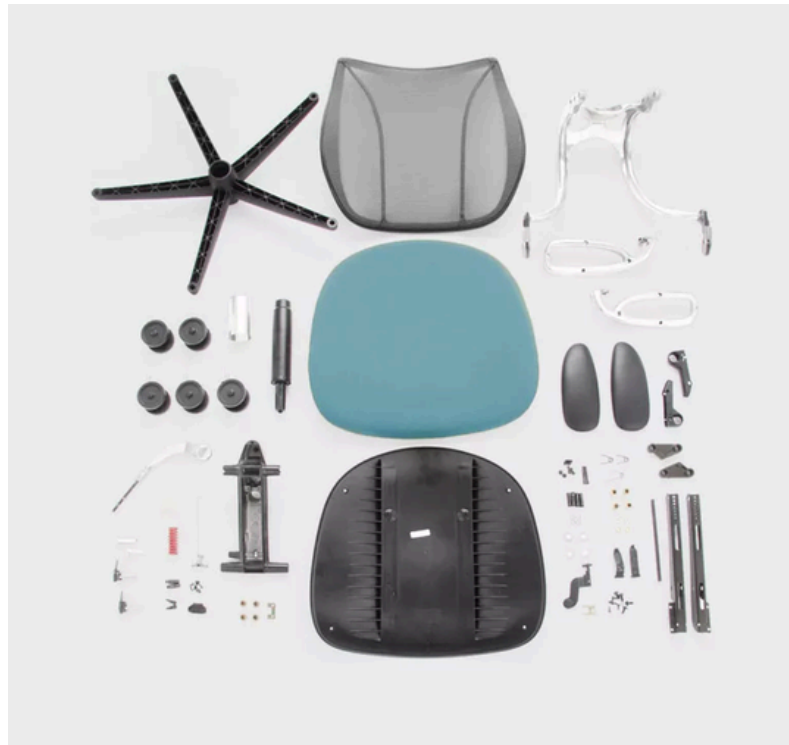
was banning 55 harmful chemicals from their products or as a new source for materials such as PVC, heavy metals, ozone depleters, etc.

Another breakthrough in Haworth’s strategy of environmental stewardship in recent years is the production of ‘SEAQUAL YARN’, a fabric produced from repurposed marine and land plastic waste. With nearly identical properties to virgin polyester, SEQUEL YARN can be used as a greener alternative to weave fabrics for furniture upholstery and represents a big step toward fully sustainable products by transforming materials like discarded plastic from environmental hazards to new and different useful creations. With over 100 products certified under the [Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer’s Association Product Sustainability Standard](#) (BIFMA) LEVEL program, our partnership with Haworth allows us to provide our customers with the ability to make informed choices.

To learn more about Haworth’s eco-friendly practices, click [here](#).

A second furniture manufacturing partner we collaborate with is [Humanscale](#), who prioritizes the use of recyclable materials like aluminum and steel while consistently evaluating the impact of their products on the environment. According to them, “[the best designs in the world achieve more with less](#)”. Staying consistent with this philosophy, their task chairs feature a weight-sensitive recline mechanism with intuitive functionality, minimizing the overall number of knobs, levers, and parts necessary to operate them.

Read more about the Environmental Policy at Humanscale [here](#).



Technology

Switching over to the technology side, [Ricoh](#) is one of our most important suppliers who makes it possible for us to offer our customers the economic benefit of energy efficiency without sacrificing performance. The leading electronics manufacturer has been awarded the [ENERGY STAR Canada Manufacturer of the Year Award](#) for three consecutive years from 2019 to 2022.

A key sustainability initiative led by Ricoh is its Equipment Recycling Program. Through this recycling program, technology products have the non-recyclable parts removed and the remaining recyclable elements reduced to pieces (approximately the size of a nickel) before being separated into various metals and plastics to be used for new products. For every Ricoh machine recycled by Ricoh, 98.4% of the machine is recovered in the recycling process.

In collaboration with Ricoh this year, we’re proud to introduce yet another innovative sustainability initiative – a toner cartridge lock. This feature prevents users from unknowingly replacing cartridges until they are completely empty, effectively extending the life of each cartridge.

How does the toner cartridge lock feature on the Ricoh 10 Series devices benefit you?



Reduce Carbon Footprint: By using cartridges to their fullest potential, you actively contribute to lowering the volume of waste toner cartridges ending up in landfills.



Lower Cost of Ownership: Keeping your Cost Per Copy (CPC) rates as low as possible is our goal. With fewer cartridge replacements, you save on both consumables and service costs, making your investment in our 10 series devices even more rewarding.

#CONSCIOUS CHOICES IN SOURCING

For our customers' economic and environmental savings, we offer this toner lock feature as standard on all new Ricoh 10 series devices without any additional charge.

Did you know? We're Canada's first Ricoh Eco Excellence Member. Membership in the Ricoh Eco Excellence Program is awarded only to dealers that meet key criteria — including the dealer's track record of environmental sustainability commitment and ability to provide customers with education, awareness, program support and guidance. Click [here](#) to learn more.

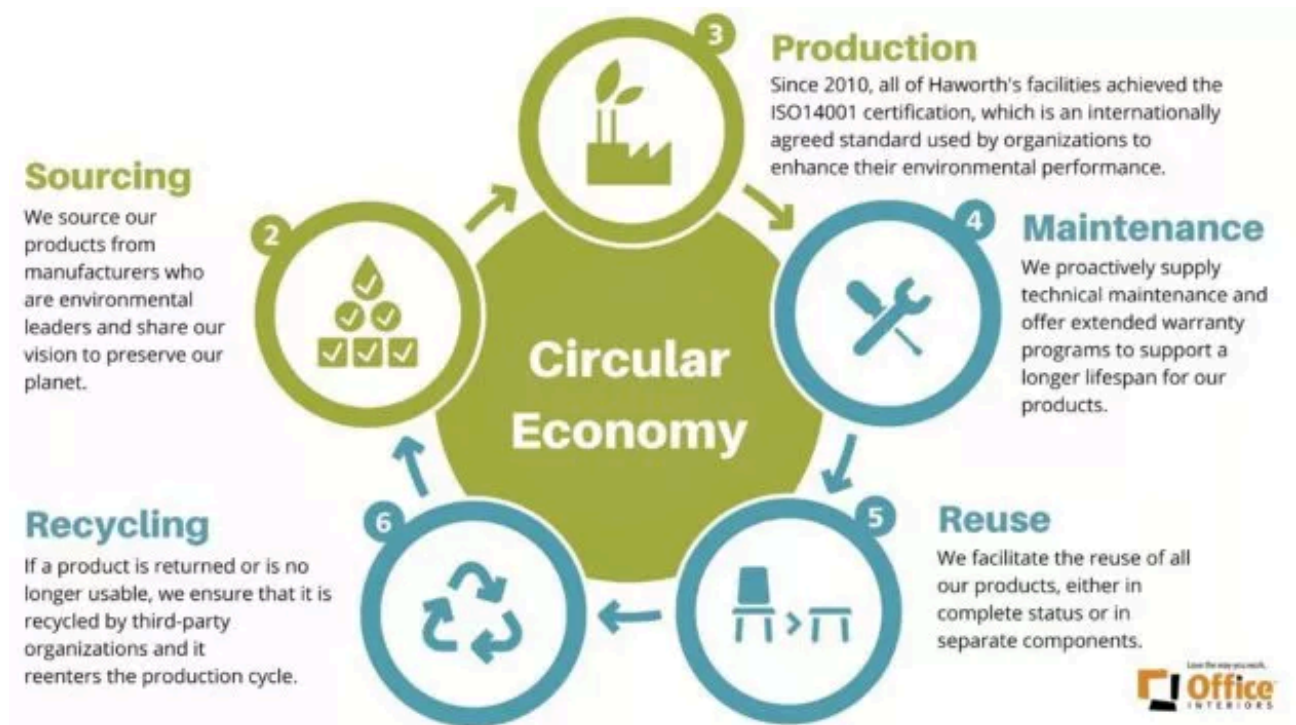
An impressive highlight from Avaya's Corporate Social Responsibility Report in 2020 mentions great advances in their new J series phones. With their focus being on designing increasingly energy-efficient products through its Design for Environment (DfE) program, the J179, J169, and J129 VoIP phones are ENERGY STAR certified products. These products further reduce energy consumption, increase efficiency, and avoid carbon emissions.

[Here's more](#) on Avaya's corporate responsibility.



2. Engagement in Circular Economy

Finding new ways to support a more circular business model is essential for our strategy and commitment. We aim to make it easier for customers to utilize alternatives to landfills when disposing of workplace products no longer needed.



Furniture and Equipment Leasing Options

Office Interiors customers can lease furniture and equipment instead of owning them outright. As customers opting for this option only require access to the products for a set period of time, this prevents furniture or equipment from being completely worn down to an irreparable point. Our leasing program allows us to maximize the utility of our products – high volume users can acquire new equipment, while low volume users can take advantage of refurbished inventory sufficient for their specific needs.

This 'Product-as-a-Service' program aims to extend the lifetime of every piece of furniture or device we manage through the 'first life' and give it a 'second life' by refurbishing and reusing, all while minimizing our environmental impact.

We resell 97% of technology equipment that is returned at the end of the lease.

An office equipped with a desktop computer, LCD monitor, and MFP that have all earned the ENERGY STAR and have power management enabled, can save up to \$430 over the life of the products.

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Equipment Maintenance and Repair

At Office Interiors, we offer our customers Service Level Agreements for their equipment. Maintenance is a deliberately structured, regular activity during which critical points are inspected to prevent the occurrence of malfunctions or accidents. Additionally, our Multifunction Printers (MFPs) are equipped with sensors that allow us to perform targeted maintenance based on operating data collected from the devices. These sensors are also used for our Auto Toner Fulfilment program, which automatically ships your replacement toner whenever your device is low. Our partnership with Haworth allows us to offer our customers products that are warranted for 24-hour / 7-day use over a specified warranty period which could range from a year to a lifetime.

All the above is aligned with our efforts to help customers preserve the usefulness of their equipment through maintenance and have it restored with repairs.

Used Furniture and Equipment Take-Back Program

We offer customers a take-back solution for used office furniture and equipment. More specifically, we reupholster and repurpose used furniture panels. We donated over 100 wooden pallets across communities in Fredericton last year. Additionally, used technology products brought to us are reconditioned for reselling or donating to schools and charitable organizations. This initiative provides our clients with a means to repurpose their furniture, fixtures, and electronic products, diverting the items from landfills.



3. Recycling Programs

Recycling and resource recovery is an important part of our sustainability efforts. As part of our sustainable business practices, we offer various programs to help you recycle your used products and for our team.

Printer Toners and Cartridge Recycling Program

Most of our current suppliers offer a cartridge return program where they provide prepaid postage labels that customers can fill out and simply place the cartridge in the mail to return their empty consumables. Any containers that our manufacturers do not handle are recycled through our in-house program. This involves us making arrangements with non-profit organizations like the Canadian Diabetes Association, which collects these cartridges and sells them to cartridge recycling companies where the bottles are processed or re-filled. Once we have exhausted every avenue available to us, under the current regulations, the remaining materials are safely disposed of.

We are proud to say that we have successfully recycled more than 90% of the cartridges that have been returned to us.



As a part of our commitment to helping our customers recycle their used toners and cartridges, we've put together [an article](#) to walk them through some easy and quick ways they can join our mission of creating a greener future.

Equipment Recycling Program

In our ongoing efforts to redirect waste from landfills, Office Interiors runs a recycling program for all equipment sold in the Maritimes. If equipment is not in a condition that can be refurbished for resale or donation, we will salvage any functioning (or repairable) parts from the device. Then, when we are left with no other use for the equipment, we transport the remnant to Dartmouth Metals for appropriate recycling, which consists of separating plastics, metal and even circuit boards.

Our printer consumables as well as equipment recycling programs have earned us a membership in the Ricoh Eco Excellence Program. Click on the link below to learn more about how we are working to reduce our own environmental impact and helping customers do the same.



Office Recycling Program

Our team at Office Interiors understands recycling support good community values and are an important component of our overall waste reduction program – that is why we follow an effective workplace waste recycling program across all our locations. Our single-stream recycling at the office consists of three main categories –

- i. Aluminum & tin cans
- ii. Plastic & glass bottles
- iii. Office paper, newspaper, cardboard



PLASTIC AND GLASS

- Plastic bags
- Plastic containers
- Glass bottles and jars



PAPER

- Boxboard
- Flyers and magazines
- Softcover books
- Paper egg cartons
- Shredded paper



ALUMINUM AND TIN

- Aluminum foil and plates



We understand that it is vital to coordinate training with the janitorial crew regarding a regular recycling collection schedule and make sure they understand what is recyclable and what is not.

Our leadership team works hard every day to educate and motivate team members by distributing guidelines, posting updates on bulletin boards and/or our intranet site, Yammer and putting up guidelines near every recycling container for easy reference.

Battery Recycling Program

The challenge we're trying to tackle with this program is reducing the amount of hazardous waste that used batteries impose on the environment as they contain corrosive liquids, toxic heavy metals, or reactive metals.

Our Service Managers across all Office Interiors locations collect used batteries from team members and ensure that they are recycled in an environmentally sound approach that meets all regulatory requirements using a third-party organization. We've successfully been able to repurpose a wide variety of batteries in this way, including alkaline, lead-acid, lithium / lithium-ion, mercury, nickel-cadmium, etc.

4. Use of Clean Technology

Here are the actions we have taken so far to combat climate change with the help of clean technology at our offices.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

We've installed [EV charging stations](#) at our headquarters in Dartmouth to support clean technology. Electric cars make a huge contribution to improving air quality in cities. Pure electric cars produce no carbon dioxide emissions when driving, reducing air pollution considerably.



Our charging stations are available to all. We find it a great opportunity for us to engage our partners, employees, and customers in our environmental mission and empower them to have an impact every day.

We're also in the process of electrifying our service fleet at Office Interiors over the coming years. **Our Service Manager will begin testing a few electric vehicles in our fleet as early as this year.**

Smart Lights

We have successfully transitioned to a completely automated lighting system in our Dartmouth warehouse facility. The motion censored lights represent a significant energy saving because they only turn on when needed and turn off by themselves when there is no movement. **This has helped us reduce our electricity consumption by over 50%.**

Lights are a huge pull for energy and so, to reduce further consumption, we have installed energy-efficient bulbs for all our light fixtures at our headquarters. Not only did switching to LED bulbs help us conserve energy, but they also helped us be kinder to our planet as they last much longer than incandescent bulbs.

Energy Efficient HVAC System

By equipping our headquarters with a high-efficiency HVAC system, we can minimize our business's carbon footprint. Our energy-efficient systems are electric, thereby reducing our reliance on carbon-intensive power plants resulting in fewer carbon emissions and more conservation of natural resources in comparison with traditional fuel-based HVAC systems. Furnaces measure efficiency by AFUE (Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency) percentages. Older units typically operate around 65% AFUE, leaving 35% of energy wasted. Our high-efficiency system operates at up to 97.3% AFUE, drastically reducing our power consumption.

High-Efficiency Air Purification System

Climate change, unfortunately, points to a future where winters will grow longer and harsher while summers will be hotter and drier. This creates the perfect recipe for air pollution to thrive the whole year-round. It also means that more efficient air filters will be needed. That is why we have adopted the use of Surgically Clean Air's air purifiers at our offices. These devices allow us to create a healthy, productive, and comfortable workspace for our team while keeping our energy consumption to a minimum. According to these statistics, Surgically Clean Air purifiers have an equivalent energy use of less than 2x60W light bulbs!

We've partnered with Surgically Clean Air to share our mission of using clean technology with our customers by offering the Jade™ 2.0. These low-energy air purification systems are now a part of our offerings.

5. Going Paper-Less

We recognize that 'the workplace experience' is overly dependent on paper, which has had a negative environmental impact. We try our utmost best to use electronic files instead of paper whenever possible. We do this by putting less emphasis on printed documents and promoting easy-to-share file formats like Portable Document Formats (PDFs), internal communication tech tools such as Yammer and Microsoft Teams, as well as electronic record filing—all of which make it easier to rely less on paper.

Going Paper-Less

Mindful paperless office policies combined with technology make our office a sustainable place.

We've cut our paper consumption by **more than 50%** over the past year.



Mindful paperless office policies combined with technology make our office a sustainable place. Here's a little more about the technology we use to keep our consumption of paper in check:

Document Management Software by Laserfiche

Manufacturing paper products produce greenhouse gases, causing deforestation and global warming. It is much more sustainable to simply reduce paper use through document management software.

The Laserfiche Documents and Records Management tool completely overhauls the manual process of printing and circulating documents in a paper format at our office. Digitizing documents and controlling electronic documents eliminates paper usage and storage and streamlines operations.

Here's a detailed case study on how we've transitioned to a digital workflow for Accounts Payables processing, resulting in not only a low paper usage but also significant productivity gains and financial savings.



Infinite Device Manager (IDM) by Print Audit

The use of IDM is another step towards turning the paperless office into a reality, as it keeps track of all our printing while optimizing all our equipment. With the help of real-time print activity reports retrieved from this software, we're able to identify specific areas to reduce print volumes and take appropriate measures either by advising our team or by deploying document management tools such as the one mentioned above or Microsoft SharePoint.

Ricoh Smart Integration (RSI)

The third piece of software on this list is Ricoh Smart Integration which allows us to limit the handling of paper documents at our offices. RSI is an add-on which can be embedded on Ricoh copiers, making it possible for our team to route documents digitally and upload them on a variety of platforms such as Microsoft Sharepoint, Dropbox or even Outlook directly from the copier itself. As a result, the need for physical paper output is avoided.

Internal Communications Platforms by Microsoft

Our team relies on several forms of electronic internal communication platforms for collaboration, project management, and company notifications. A few examples include Teams, Yammer, Outlook, One Drive and Share Point.

We're proud to state that we've cut down our paper consumption by more than 50% over the past year using the strategies mentioned above.

Love The Way We Protect Our Environment

Protecting and restoring our environment is one of Office Interiors' foundational, company-wide values – we live by this philosophy every day, and it is baked into every aspect of our business.

Creating creative, sustainable solutions through our research and development contributes to preserving the environment, supporting and strengthening global communities, and maintaining well-being while creating shared value now and into the future.

The end of this page is just the beginning of what we hope is an ongoing conversation.

Feel free to [reach out to us](#) if you have any questions or would like to learn more. We'd love to talk to you and hear about your sustainability practices as well as any ideas you may have to help us on our own sustainability journey!



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