



Meeting 5: Continue “Workbook 4: Solid Waste and Recycling”

1. Thank everyone for participating in our environmental sustainability program.
2. Remind everyone that your office or clinic includes five minutes of environmental sustainability in the staff meeting once a month.
3. Ask your leaders to report on the progress so far with the Energy Efficiency and Solid Waste and Recycling Action Steps.
4. At this meeting, we will discuss how to minimize and recycle our office waste. Read aloud the “Recycling Your Waste” Action Step from Workbook 4 (provided below).

[Workbook 4](#)

5. Announce that at the next meeting, we will focus on the topic of Education for the staff and patients.
6. After the meeting, fill out the Green Meeting Notes form. Keep it very brief– not more than 5 minutes for completing the form: [Green Meeting Notes Form](#) . File this and email it to member.services@mygreendoctor.org.



More Solid Waste and Recycling Action Steps



Buy Recycled Paper



Adopt a policy to buy only recycled-content and low toxicity paper products. Paper comes with different amounts of recycled content; your office supply vendor will explain the options. Set a goal of at least 30% recycled content. Recycled paper costs a bit more but your energy savings from Meetings 2 and 3 may more than pay for it. Consider using only recycled paper and only vegetable dye inks for outside printing orders. Recycled paper is available for purchase for every paper product in the office: patient gowns, exam table covers, notepads, stationery, patient handouts, charts, photocopy and printer paper,



brochures, business cards, etc.

Issues to discuss:

1. Can we agree to do this? Which paper products shall we buy with recycled content?
2. Who will agree to lead this topic?
3. Can we develop a schedule for transitioning to recycled paper products?



Recycle or Refill Printer Ink Cartridges

Printer ink cartridges can be recycled by taking them to Staples, Best Buy, or Office Max/Office Depot and dropping them off. Call first to confirm that your local store has this program. Also, if your medical practice uses HP cartridges, send them back to HP. They have a closed loop recycling program, and they will recycle or repurpose your items. Here is the link to the recycling program for HP printer cartridges: [HP Recycling](#).

Here's another tip: in the US and Canada, EnvironmentFirstPrinting.com offers soy-based ink (no fossil fuels used) for every commercial printer type and recycles the printer cartridges. Using this ink does not invalidate printer warranties but check with your maker.

Issues to discuss:

1. Can we agree to do this?
2. Where will we collect our used printer cartridges to recycle them?
3. Who will lead this Action Step?



Say "No" to Styrofoam

Agree as an office not to use Styrofoam or similar disposable cups and plates. Styrofoam is made with environmentally unfriendly manufacturing methods and is wasteful. Speak with your product vendors about cups and plates made from alternatives such as paper, soy, or corn. Other steps to consider include:



- Buy sets of inexpensive dishes for the office.
- Decide not to offer straws in the office.
- Encourage office colleagues to bring their own reusable cups for water, tea, and coffee.
- Inform the salespeople who bring food and beverages to your office that you no longer accept Styrofoam.
- Tell your patients that “this office no longer uses Styrofoam”.

Issues to discuss:

1. Can we agree to do this?
2. Can we order paper or corn-based cups, plates, and flatware or purchase inexpensive reusable cups, plates, and silverware for the office that can be washed?
3. Can we re-use our personal cups and glasses?
4. How can we inform our colleagues, patients, and families about this?
5. Who will lead this Action Step?



Eliminate Bottled Water and the Water Cooler

Eliminating bottled water and the water cooler saves money, saves electricity, and averts a lot of plastic waste. Of course, you can only do this if your town’s public water supply is safe to drink.

Bottled water is expensive, wasteful, and less rigorously tested for safety than most public water supplies. Encourage your employees to bring reusable water bottles to the office.

Another way to reduce single-use plastic bottled water is to install a refillable water bottle fountain or station. Some examples of refillable water bottle fountains are:

- a. [Bevi Refillable Water Bottle Stations](#)
- b. [Elkay](#)



c. [Meetpat](#)

Issues to discuss:

1. Can we agree to do this?
2. Who will lead this Action Step?
3. Can we print for the waiting room the My Green Doctor brochure, "Choose Tap Water"? <https://mygreendoctor.org/resources/waiting-room-brochures/>