



## 2012 Maryland Green Registry Leadership Award Winner



### Staples, Inc.



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*The Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards recognize organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the implementation of sustainable practices, the demonstration of measurable results, and the continual improvement of environmental performance. Read here how this award winner achieved its environmental success and continues to move forward along the path to sustainability.*

#### **What innovation or set of results are you most proud of?**

We have implemented a Race to the Top partnership with our top suppliers to drive sustainable innovation in product manufacturing, packaging and distribution. The partnership supports our goal to reduce packaging materials in the U.S. by 20% by 2020 from a 2010 baseline. Race to the Top challenges our key suppliers to redesign product packaging and reduce waste and chemicals of concern.

We are also proud to host 36 rooftop solar power systems at 33 facilities nationwide, which produced more than 12.7 million kWh of clean energy in 2011. In Mary-



land, Staples has a 1.5-megawatt (MW) solar power installation at its distribution center in Hagerstown, Maryland and a 1.01-megawatt (MW) solar power installation in our Fulfillment/Sales office in Hanover, Maryland.



*Rooftop solar array at Staples' Hanover, MD Fulfillment Center.*

#### **How do you involve employees from all parts of your organization in your environmental programs and projects and how do you keep them motivated?**

Educating our associates on sustainability and environmental issues is one of the cornerstones of Staples' commitment to the environment. This education takes many forms.

##### *Associate Engagement*

Staples' environmental team meets regularly with a variety of groups within the company to discuss our environmental programs, commitments and achievements and how these goals can be integrated into our business strategy, cost-saving initiatives and customer communications. For example: Staples' environmental team works closely with our facilities and delivery fleet teams to explore new ways to conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions, as well as provides on-going recommendations to our merchandising team on ways to maximize sustainable product sourcing. Additionally, Staples has an environmental task force of representatives from our many business units and functions, including marketing, public relations, merchandising, supply chain, etc.



*Staple's all electric truck.*

The task force meets periodically to discuss updates to environmental programs and product offerings and also brainstorms strategies for further educating associates on environmental issues.

#### *Associate Communications*

We integrate environmental messages into all of our internal communications channels designed to reach all associates. This includes everything from major internal meetings with thousands of associates to small group discussions. We have specific written materials designed to help educate our sales force on our practices and accomplishments.

#### *Motivating*

Looking ahead, we plan to introduce environmental sustainability training for select Staples associates. We're also looking to expand our associates' environmental awareness through periodic lunch & learn events and presentations in our home office.

### ***What is the first step you would recommend that someone take when starting to green their organization?***

Focus on creating a cultural evolution versus a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift denotes flipping a switch, but in reality, for long-term success we must incorporate issues into the cultural component of a company. A cultural revolution effects broader and more long-lasting change, but it does take time. Also, companies have to start viewing and using terms differently, such as replacing the term "waste management" with "resource management." Although they are essentially the same terms, companies have to shift their language to shift behavior.

### ***Do you have a favorite publication, website, or organization that provides inspiration, ideas and/or good technical information for your facility type?***

[www.environmentalleader.com](http://www.environmentalleader.com), [www.greenbiz.com](http://www.greenbiz.com) and [www.fastcompany.com](http://www.fastcompany.com)

### ***What future innovations would you like to see in your industry and what is your vision for your organization?***

We would like to see more holistic certification standards for products which capture total lifecycle impacts of products rather than just one or two attributes.

***For more information on environmental best practices at Staples, Inc., visit the Maryland Green Registry website at [www.green.maryland.gov/registry](http://www.green.maryland.gov/registry) and click on List of Maryland Green Registry Members to view member profiles.***

*The Maryland Green Registry is a voluntary program that promotes and recognizes environmentally sustainable practices in organizations of all types and sizes across the State. Visit the Maryland Green Registry website at [www.green.maryland.gov/registry](http://www.green.maryland.gov/registry) for tips and resources designed to help organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability.*

