

Green Office Certification Program Guide



Brought to you by the [Facilities Division](#) and [Campus Planning & Development Division](#)



Northeastern University

Green Office Certification Program Guide



The Green Office Program Guide provides resources, guidance, and examples for each question asked in the Green Office Certification survey. For additional information, please contact us at greenoffice@northeastern.edu.

ENERGY

1) I turn off office lights when rooms are unoccupied

Whenever you are the last person to leave a room or if you walk by an empty room that has its lights on, you can make a difference by shutting those lights off.

2) I use natural lighting and turn off overhead lights whenever possible

If your work space is located close to a window that can provide enough natural light to work by, try turning off your artificial lighting and using natural light.

If your work space does have a window, but does not have enough of natural light, consider means to improve such as moving your desk closer. Studies have shown that utilizing natural lighting can improve one's productivity and mood.

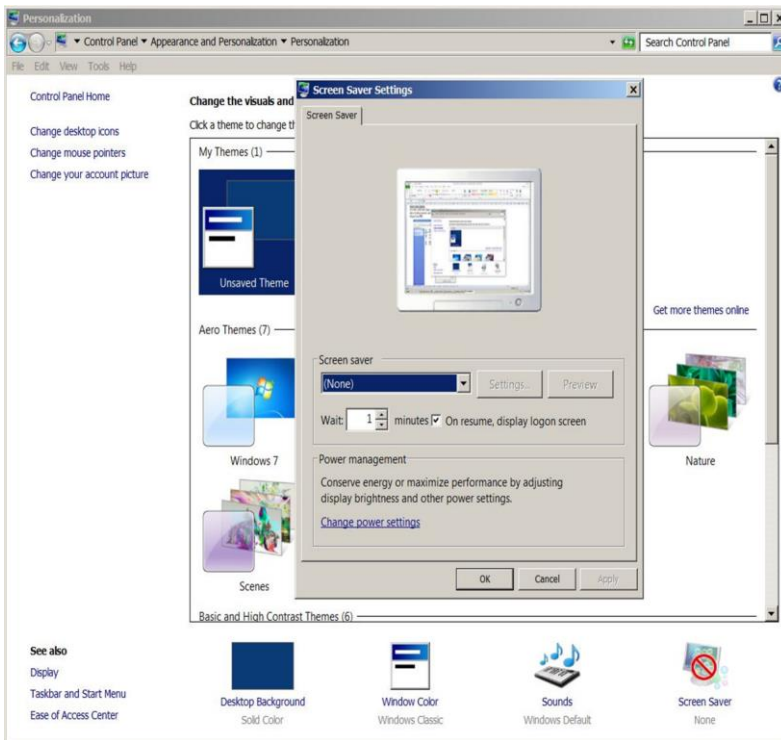
3) All of my task lighting (including floor and desk lamps) uses either LED or CFL, but no incandescent light bulbs

Task lighting is a great way to use less energy, but still get the light you need to complete your work. However, make sure you are using LED or CFL bulbs. [Click here](#) to see a comparison chart on the energy efficiency and environmental impact of LED, CFL, and incandescent light bulbs. (Source: DesignRecycleInc.com)

4) My computer screensaver is set to "Blank" or "None" (or "Never" for Mac)

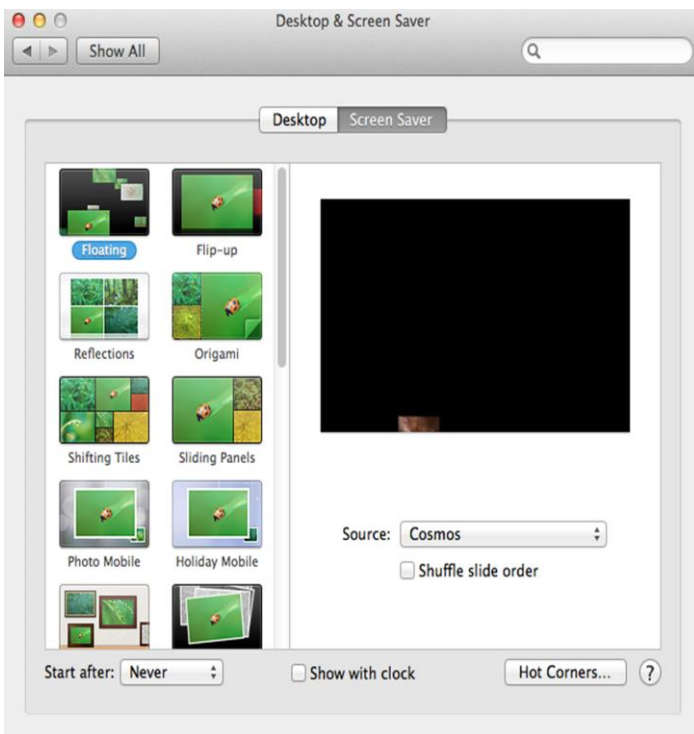
Screen Saver Options for PC Users

Go to Start, Control Panel, Personalization, and click the "Screen Saver" icon in the lower right corner. In the drop-down menu, select "(None)". Then click Apply at the bottom of the window for the changes to take effect.



Screen Saver Options for Mac Users

Under “Applications” -> “System Preferences”, click on “Desktop & Screen Saver.” Choose the “Screen Saver” tab. At the bottom left of the window, “Start After:” gives a drop down menu for the screen saver. Choose “Never.”

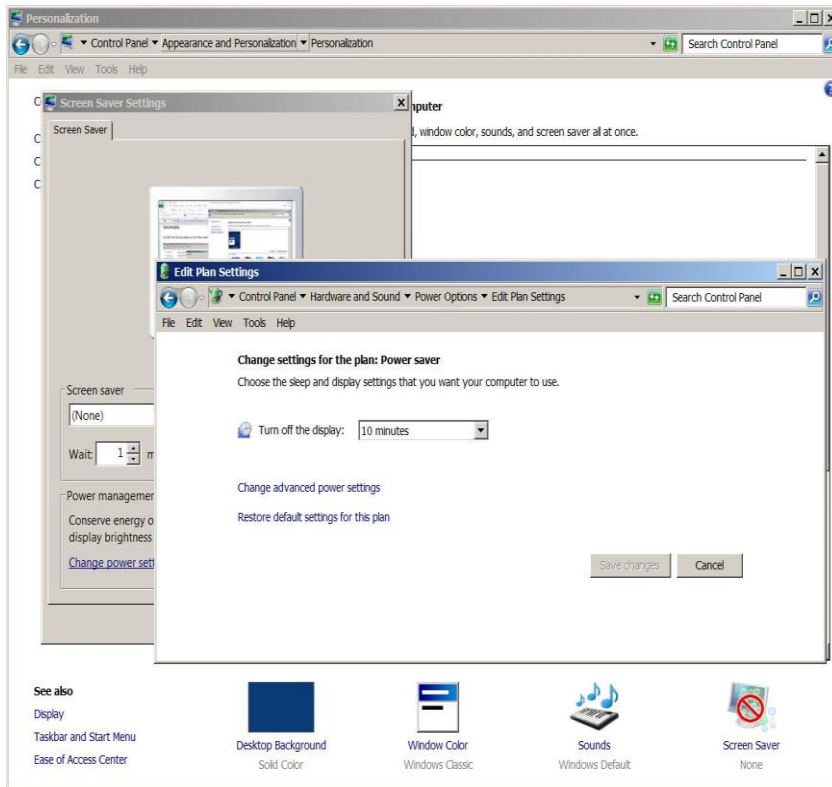


5) My computer monitor is set to sleep after 10 minutes or less

Computer Monitor Settings for PC Users

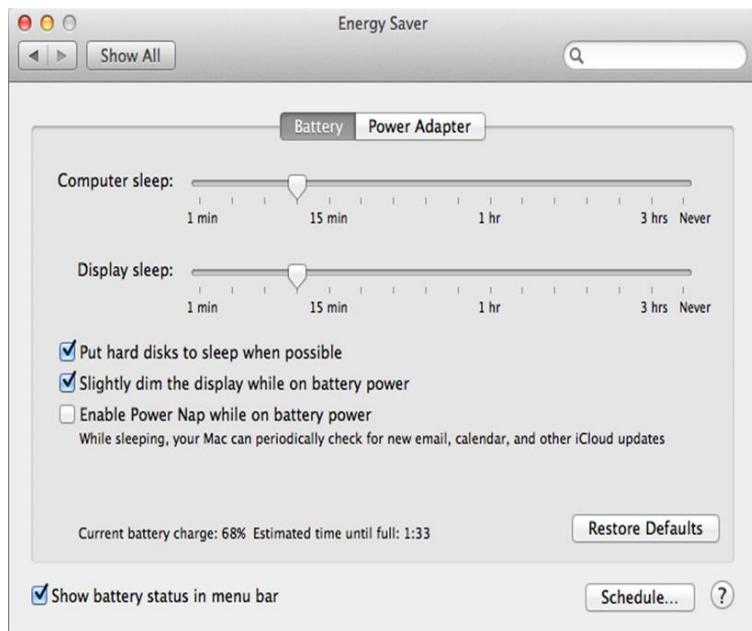
From the Personalization Window, Screen Saver tab (same as above) under Power Management, click on "Change Power Settings" to open up the “Power Options” window. This window displays power plan options. For the Green Office

requirement, click the “Change Plan Settings” link to the right of the currently selected plan, then select 10 Minutes (or less). Click “Save Changes” to allow the changes to take effect.



Computer Monitor Settings for Mac Users

Under “Applications” -> “System Preferences”, click on “Energy Saver”. On both the “Battery” and “Power Adapter” tabs, slide the meter titled “Display Sleep” to 10 minutes or less.



6) I have reduced brightness on all monitors to reduce energy usage

Reducing brightness on your computer screens and monitors can help you use less energy while working on your device.

7) If accessible, I shut off and unplug electronics and office equipment when not in use, before I leave the office, and over the weekends

When electronics are off, yet still plugged into outlets, they are still drawing out electricity known as ‘phantom energy’. Unplugging your devices at the end of the day ensures that no energy is being wasted.

Tip: Plug all of your devices into a power strip so when you go to turn off and unplug, there is only one chord that needs to be handled.

8) I use a shared printer as opposed to having a personal one in my office

Utilizing a communal printer minimizes the energy usage that would come from having multiple printers in the office.

If your office is interested in purchasing a shared printer, please contact [NU Procurement Services](#) at procurement@neu.edu or (617) 373-2135.

8a) I shut off my personal printers when not in use

Keeping your printer on when not in use wastes energy. For general questions on the printers, please contact [NU Procurement Services](#) at procurement@neu.edu or (617) 373-2135.

9) I shut the windows when the building’s heating or cooling system is running

Keeping the windows open when the building’s heating or cooling system is on is counterproductive, and will waste energy by sending the system into overdrive. Closing the windows ensures that only the energy needed to regulate the room is being used.

10) I close the blinds at night in cold and hot weather to improve insulation in the office

Closing the blinds at night is an easy way to help with insulation in the office and can mean less energy spent on reheating or re-cooling the rooms the following day.

11) I regularly encourage others in the workplace to act more sustainably

We share responsibility for creating a sustainable environment. Regularly encouraging others to act more sustainably can help reduce waste and assist with the University’s commitment to reduce our carbon footprint by 80% before 2050.

WASTE & POLLUTION MINIMIZATION

1) I submit Facilities Online Work Requests forms through myNEU to report leaky faucets, non-working lights, broken windows, etc.

A broken faucet or window can lead to energy waste by loss of water or insulation so it is important to file work requests as soon as possible. All non-emergency routine repairs, maintenance, and custodial requests must be submitted via the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#). Please follow these steps:

- Log into [myNEU](#) with your credentials
- Go to the “Services and Links” tab
- Under the Faculty/Staff Services section, please scroll down until you find “Facilities Online Work Request”
- Please fill out the work order completely and to the best of your ability

You may also contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754

2) I use reusable mugs and water bottles instead of disposable cups

Plastic use has grown dramatically and is causing pollution all over the world in our natural environments, waterways, and cities. To avoid adding to this problem, keep a mug at your workspace and a reusable and durable water bottle with you during the day.

3) I regularly pack my own lunch in reusable containers

Regularly packing your own lunch is not only beneficial for your health and your wallet, but can reduce your negative impact on the environment. By preparing your own food in reusable containers, you reduce your consumption of disposable packaging, and minimize food waste.

4) I have a set of durable and reusable silverware that I keep in the office

Keeping a set of silverware at your workspace or in your bag reduces plastic waste generated by disposable utensils.

5) I keep at least one reusable bag in the office to use in place of disposable bags

Reduce your plastic bag waste by keeping a reusable bag on hand for any necessary trips to the store during the workday. If you do end up getting plastic bags, you can reuse them to avoid generating additional waste.

6) I send meeting agendas and handouts electronically prior to meetings instead of printing hard copies.

Sending agendas and handouts electronically ahead of meetings is not only a great way to stay organized and prepared for a meeting, but it will also help eliminate waste by not printing out hard copies.

7) I usually take notes electronically or on scrap paper, such as one-sided misprinted paper or out of date stationary.

Take meeting notes on your laptop, tablet, or on scrap paper to help with waste minimization.

8) When appropriate, I save files electronically and try to minimize printed copies

Saving files electronically not only significantly reduces paper usage, but allows you to easily access and edit files.

9) I unsubscribe from hard copy junk mail (magazines, catalogs, newspapers) whenever possible and subscribe to electronic subscriptions

Instead of throwing unwanted mail in the recycling bin, unsubscribing from junk mail relieves you of the inconvenience, and significantly reduces paper waste. Companies such as [Catalog Choice](#), [PaperKarma](#), and [OptOut](#) help you easily unsubscribe.

Tip: before purchasing a new subscription to a magazine, catalog, journal, newspapers, etc. contact the [NU Library](#) to inquire whether the University has already acquired an online subscription.

10) When appropriate, I set margins to 1" or less to reduce the amount of paper used for each job

Reducing margins can decrease the number of pages your document requires, effectively reducing paper waste.

11) When I print or make copies, I utilize the double-sided option if appropriate.

Double-sided printing is an effective way to cut paper usage by 50% when making hard copies of documents.

12) I have at least one potted plant at my desk

"Studies have shown that plants in homes and workplaces help reduce stress, increase productivity, enhance employee attitudes, lower operating costs, help in "green building" design, and improve air quality."

<http://www.uvm.edu/pss/ppp/articles/plantswork.html>

13) I work paperless

Working paperless is a big feat! Taking notes on a laptop, or tablet, saving files electronically, and emailing handouts and agendas can all help in trying to make this leap in the workplace.

RECYCLING

1) I have a recycling bin in my workstation

Keeping a recycling bin at your personal work station is a great way to improve recycling habits.

To order a personal recycling bin, please contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754 or submit a work order through the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#).

2) I recycle all office paper

Paper Recycling Tips from the [Waste Management website](#):

- Recyclable paper includes: Magazines and catalogs, telephone books, direct mail, brochures, pamphlets and booklets in addition to cereal, cake, chip and cracker boxes.
- Be sure to remove the liner and all food from the box, flatten the box and place flattened box in a paper sack with your junk mail, mixed paper, magazines and catalogs
- Non-recyclable paper includes tissue, waxed and carbon paper, and pizza boxes

Contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754 if you have any questions on recycling.

3) I recycle all bottles and cans that I come across in the office

There are recycling bins located around the office and the University for bottles and aluminum cans.

Glass Recycling Tips from the [Waste Management website](#):

- Prepare glass containers for recycling by rinsing out with water
- Labels on glass containers do not have to be removed because they are removed during the crushing process and/or burned off during the melting process
- Avoid breaking the glass and mixing broken colors together as this may make the glass unacceptable for recycling

Aluminum Recycling Tips from the [Waste Management website](#):

- Prepare aluminum cans for recycling by either crushing the cans to save space or leaving them uncrushed.
- Cans that are rinsed out will have little or no odor and are less likely to attract bugs.

Contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754 with any further questions.

4) I recycle all cardboard that I come across in the office

“Recycled cardboard saves 24% of the total energy needed for virgin cardboard”

(<https://www.wm.com/location/california/ventura-county/west-hills/recycle/facts.jsp>)

- Prepare cardboard for recycling by removing all other materials in the box and other packing materials.
- Break down cardboard boxes to save storage space.
- Try to keep cardboard dry and free from food waste.

Contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754 with any further questions on recycling.

5) I contact Facilities Customer Service (x2754) before disposing of old office furniture

Contacting facilities before disposing of unwanted furniture ensures that it will either be reused or recycled. Please submit a work order through the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#).

6) I properly dispose of electronic devices as per the University’s recycling policy

Please refer to the university’s [Policy on Asset Disposition](#)

7) I recycle special materials such as printer cartridges, plastic bags, film, or batteries (anything that applies to my office’s usage)

If you have any questions regarding recycling, please contact the Facilities Customer Service line at (617) 373-2754 or submit a work order through the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#).

TRANSPORTATION

1) I regularly use sustainable modes of transportation to get to work such as carpool, railroad, biking, etc.

Please visit the university's [Commuting Services website](#) for alternative transportation options. To enroll online, go to [myNEU](#), select the Services and Link tab, then select "Commuter Benefit."

2) I provide alternative transportation information to office visitors and people traveling to campus for an event or meeting.

The Boston campus is accessible by multiple forms of public transportation. [Click here](#) for Northeastern's campus map and transportation information. The [MBTA website](#) includes maps of all the different public transit options in and around Boston.

3) I drive a hybrid/electric vehicle.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, "Hybrid and plug-in electric vehicles can help increase energy security, improve fuel economy, and reduce emissions" http://www.afdc.energy.gov/fuels/electricity_benefits.html

PURCHASING

1) I contact Facilities Customer Service (x2754) before I purchase new furniture to see if the appropriate used furniture is available in the warehouse.

To inquire about used furniture in our warehouse, please submit a work order through the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#)

2) Instead of purchasing new supplies, I use inventory from the office.

Using supplies provided by your department saves money and reduces consumption because you are not purchasing materials in addition to what the university has already purchased.

3) I consolidate orders to reduce packaging and save on shipping fees.

By strategically grouping orders, there will be fewer shipments and reduced packaging.

4) When appropriate, I order from local Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Woman Business Enterprise (WBE), and Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) vendors to support the local community.

Supporting local businesses helps to reduce energy waste (from transportation) and helps support the local community. [Click here](#) to visit the NU Procurement Services website for a list of vetted MBE, WBE, and SLBE vendors.

Northeastern has a proud history of service learning and community engagement, which can be found on the [Northeastern University Institutional Master Plan website](#).

5) I contact Facilities Customer Service (x2754) to provide composting and recycling bins at catered events and meetings on campus.

Composting and recycling bins at large catered events will help decrease our carbon footprint. To order bins please submit a work order through the Facilities Online Work Request order system through [myNEU](#).

6) I provide alternatives to plastic water bottles (ie. pitchers, cambros of water) at meetings and events.

When ordering food from a vendor, requesting cambros of water reduces waste that comes from individual water bottles. Rebecca's Café is a preferred vendor that provides this service. Providing a pitcher of filtered water at meetings will reduce plastic waste from individual bottles.

6a) The cups I provide at these meetings and events are made from environmentally friendly materials water at meetings

Providing plastic cups at meetings and events will still add to plastic waste.

7) I count the number of confirmed attendees before making a food order.

Knowing the number of people you are ordering for reduces food waste that can accrue from overestimating the amount of food you need.

VOLUNTEER

1) I serve as a Green office Certification Eco-Ambassador.

With the guidance and support of the Green Office Certification program leads, Eco-Ambassadors are trained to be liaisons that engage faculty and staff of sustainability efforts on campus. Eco-Ambassadors actively promote sustainable actions, answer questions, communicate information to their peers, and increase awareness. To volunteer you must first go through the certification process and contact greenoffice@northeastern.edu

INNOVATIONS

If you or your department have taken any sustainability focused initiatives in your workplace and/or home, please take the opportunity to list them on the survey for the chance at extra points awarded to your certification. Each innovation equals 1 point.

YOUR FINAL SCORE

The Green Office Certification Program features three certification levels, **Bronze, Silver, and Gold**, which can be earned by practicing and maintaining sustainable habits in the workplace.

To register, submit the Green Office Certification survey by following the Instructions on the [Green Office Certification website](#). The certification level is determined at the end of the questionnaire and a Green Office Team representative will contact you to schedule a walkthrough and evaluation of your office/workspace. Once your application is complete you will receive your certificate.

RECERTIFICATION

We highly encourage everyone to recertify every year! Please contact greenoffice@northeastern.edu with the subject title "Recertification" and a representative will assist you.

CONTACT US

Please contact us at greenoffice@northeastern.edu

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