



How to ReUse Office Supplies and Set Up a ReSupply Center

Office Sustainability Checklist



Reuse office supplies by creating a center for staff to donate supplies they no longer need and take gently used supplies for Agency use. This will contribute to cost-savings, facilitate the reuse of supplies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By reusing office supplies you are reducing the amount of materials purchased and disposed which results in meeting waste reduction goals of EO1.

Below are some steps your Agency can take to start a ReSupply Center. To be successful, Central Services or Purchasing staff should be involved in managing the ReSupply Center along with volunteers.



- Pens, Pencils
- Markers, Highlighters
- Paper Clips, Binder Clips
- Manilla & Accordion Folders
- Hanging Folders
- Two Pocket Folders
- Desk top and cubicle organizers
- Report Divider Tabs
- Envelopes
- Staplers
- Three-Ring Binders
- In /Out Baskets
- Bookends
- Clipboards, copy holders

Organize a team. Team may consist of Central Services and Purchasing Staff, Green Team members, or other volunteers. They will be responsible for collecting and organizing the used office supplies and making them available in a central location.

Location, location, location! Before collecting supplies, work with building manager and facility services to find a convenient place for your ReSupply Center -- an empty cubicle, a large cabinet, shelves, closet, etc. If you are in a building with multiple agencies, you can reach out to the other agencies to share space for a common resupply area.

Set some rules. Decide what you would like to offer in your ReSupply Center and then draw up guidelines for donations and “shopping”. For example: the acceptable condition of donated items, if some items can be taken for personal use, etc.

Designate a collection site. You will need a convenient place and container for staff to regularly drop off their unwanted supplies, e.g., a break room, floor mail room, etc. Use signage to identify what goes into the container.

Promote the Center. Publicize your new ReSupply Center with a kick-off event, ribbon cutting, e-mail announcement, posters, etc. Update information about the Center on your internal website regularly. Publicize your accomplishments. Share information and results with staff periodically to encourage the use of the Center and emphasize its success.

Communicate. Ask all staff, especially purchasing staff, to check the ReSupply Center for supplies before ordering new and include in your Agency’s purchasing policy. You may never need to buy paper clips again!

Track. Ask staff to log items they take using a form for tracking purposes towards Executive Order 1 waste reduction goals. Once or twice each year review the tracking logs to analyze how often staff is utilizing the Center and what supplies they are using. Consider if additional publicity is needed.

Keep it clean! If your Center is overflowing with some products, e.g., 3-ring binders, consider coordinating a donation to a non-profit or local school.

Host annual “**cleanout**” events for staff to take time to organize their workspace and donate excess supplies to the Center. Make sure everyone knows that when staff leave or retire, they should plan to donate reusable supplies to the ReSupply Center.



Next Steps

- Modify purchasing policy/procedures. See “Sample Purchasing Guidance for Staff” in box.
- Communicate with purchasing staff so they are aware of the items available at the ReSupply Center and won't need to order these.
- Once or twice each year review the tracking logs to analyze how often staff is utilizing the Center and what supplies they are using. Consider if additional publicity is needed.
- Measure your results. Between April 2009 and December 2010, the DEEP ReSupply Center calculated a savings of **\$12,200** and the equivalent of **5 metric tons of CO2** in greenhouse gas emissions by reusing instead of buying new.
- Publicize your accomplishments. Share information and results with staff periodically to encourage the use of the Center and emphasize its success.
- Host annual “**cleanout**” events for staff to take time to organize their work space and donate excess supplies to the Center. Make sure everyone knows that when staff leave or retire, they should plan to donate reusable supplies to the Center.
- Consider using the **EPA WasteWise** program to track your success from year to year in reducing, reusing, and recycling.



SAMPLE Purchasing Guidance for Staff

1. Before purchasing an item or service, **check** to see if it is already available:

- In your agency's **Reuse Center**
- In your Division's supply cabinet
- Through existing State contract
- In State surplus

2. Purchase "Green/Environmentally Preferable Products" whenever possible by:

- Checking the [DAS Environmentally Preferable Purchasing \(EPP\) Program](#) webpage
- Developing a [Green Purchasing Policy](#) for your agency.

For more information:
contact the DEEP Green Team at (860) 424-3297 or visit www.ct.gov/deep/p2

