



Assess the environmental impact of your business

There are environmental laws and regulations which all businesses must comply with and those for specific industry sectors. Good environmental practices can be cost-effective when recycling methods are being used. Operating measures to protect the environment can enhance a business's reputation and can also contribute to the profitability of your business.

This involves:

1. knowing about current laws and regulations that can affect small businesses
2. putting in place measures to comply with environmental legislation
3. developing good environmental practice
4. reviewing the effectiveness of your business's environmental practices

What you need to do

- find out about current key environmental laws and regulations
- identify regulations and requirements that are specific to your industry sector
- decide which laws and regulations apply to your business, its products or services
- decide what tasks need to be done, when and by whom, to comply with the laws and regulations
- identify the people and organisations where you can get advice and support on environmental practice
- look at other ways in which in which your business could affect the environment and think about any changes you could make to lessen the effect
- decide what additional measures you can take to make your business environmentally friendly
- investigate the cost-benefits of introducing these measures
- decide who should be involved in implementing environmentally friendly practices and what their role should be
- identify how adopting any of these measures might enhance the reputation of your business
- carry out regular reviews of environmental practices of your business and identify further steps to improve their effectiveness



What you need to know and understand

Laws and regulations

- what laws and regulations you must comply with to reduce the harm your business may cause to the environment (such as those covering emissions to air, noise, waste, raw materials, packaging, energy use, and water use)
- how to meet the requirements of environmental laws and regulations
- who has the power to assess your businesses to enforce environmental laws and regulations
- what can happen if you fail to comply with environmental law and other regulations

Good environmental practice

- why it is a good idea to improve your business's environmental performance, even if you are not required to do so by law
- how to assess your business's environmental impact and identify what could be improved
- what simple changes you can make to improve environmental performance, such as saving energy, recycling, reducing travel and using less water

Business benefits

- how good environmental practices can help benefit your business's reputation
- how to communicate your environmental commitment to shareholders, investors, customers, employees and the general public
- how involving employees in environmental discussions can improve their motivation
- what financial incentives there may be to make changes (such as Capital Allowances and Carbon Trust loans)
- how being able to show your business has sound environmental policies and procedures helps in getting competitive insurance premiums



Professional advice and information

- what information on environmental law is available and from which organisations
- why it is important to use proper advice to find out about law and regulations
- what role the professional adviser has
- how to use free and paid for sources of advice

